

Childhood Education

*The Magazine for Teachers of Young Children
To Stimulate Thinking Rather Than Advocate Fixed Practice*

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FRANCES MAYFARTH, *Editor*

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Next Month—

■ Louis Adamic's editorial, "Training in Fraternity", contains a challenge to teachers concerning one of the most vital issues facing Americans today.

What is a good environment for the growth of children? The answer given by Harold Clark, professor of education at Teachers College, Columbia University, is not the usual one.

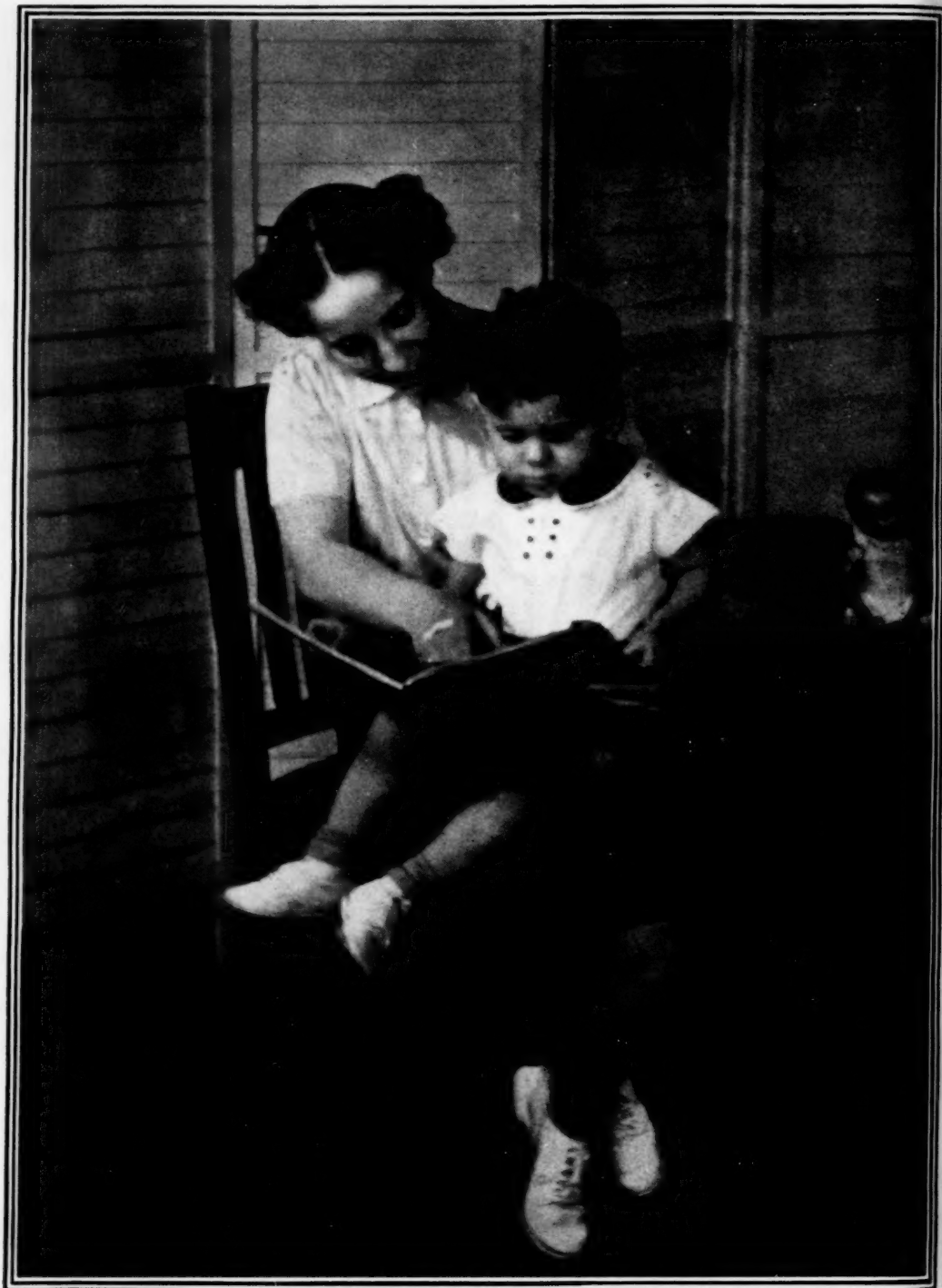
"Broadening Educational Opportunities Beyond Your School", by William G. Carr, contains highly significant implications in the field of public relations for all teachers.

Helping eight-year-olds understand why we behave as we do presents a unique approach to developing an inquiring mind concerning human behavior.

Other articles will describe number and writing experiences of children. Suggestions for celebrating Christmas will be published in the December issue.

EXTRA COPIES—Orders for extra copies of this issue must be received by the Association for Childhood Education by the tenth of the month of issue.

How Reading Is Taught Today



Annual Report of the Superintendent of Schools, Chicago, 1933-34

Reading begins at home with mother as the storyteller



Iowa State Teachers College, Cedar Falls

Listening to a story



National College of Education

Reading stories we have written



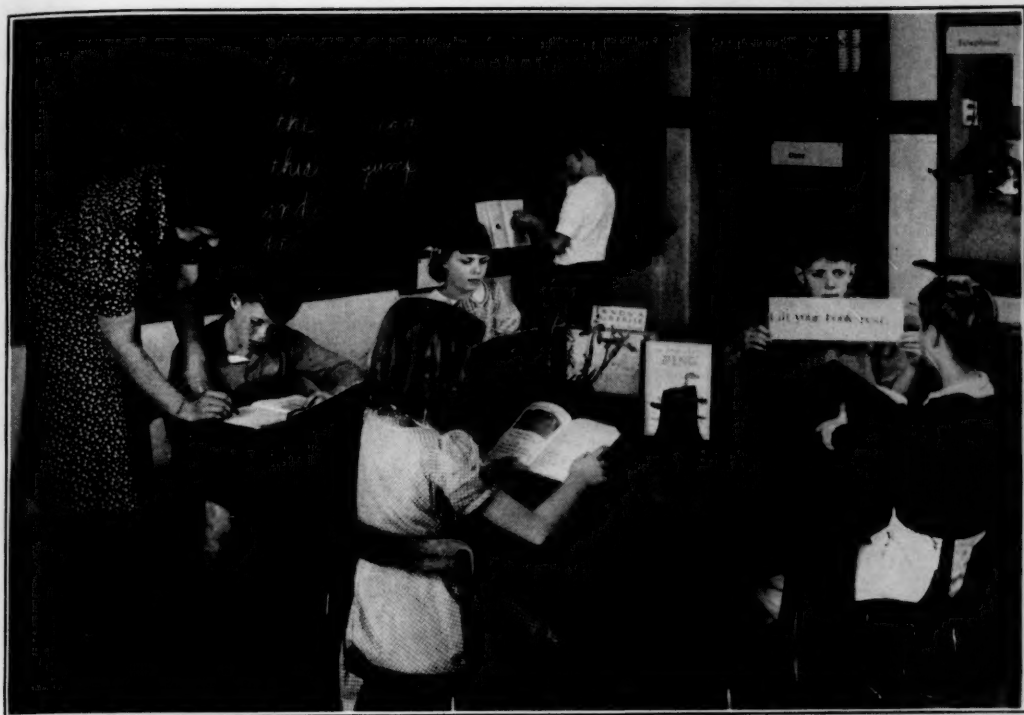
Alice Carey, Sprague School, Brockton, Massachusetts

Our teacher reads us many stories that are too difficult for us to read by ourselves



Brigham Young University Elementary School

Enjoying the new books in our library



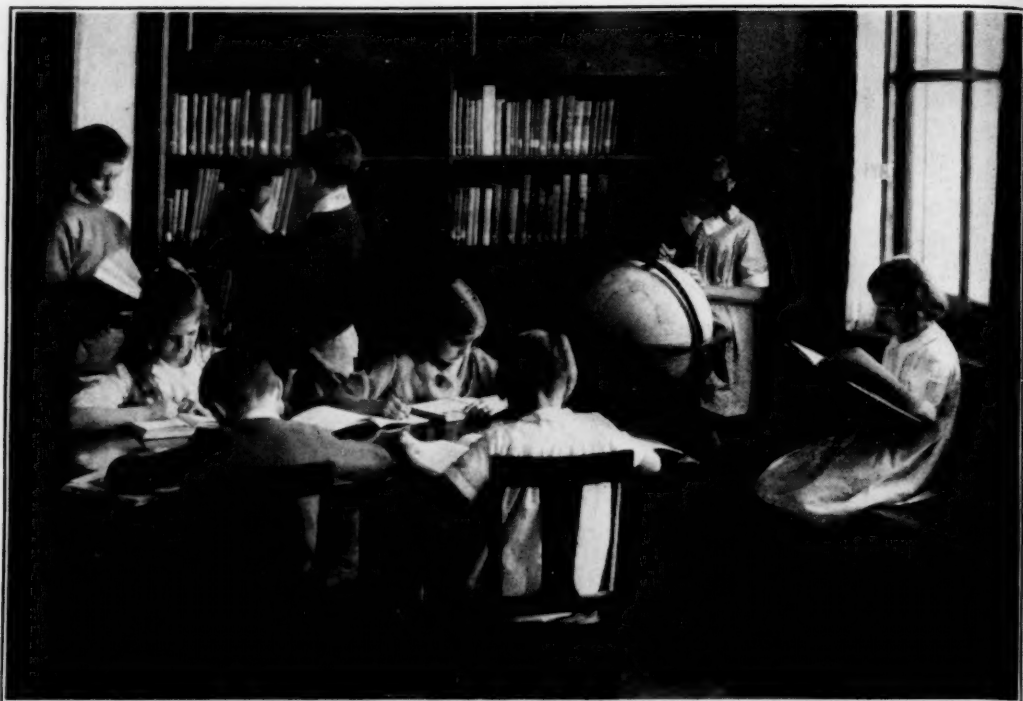
Public Schools, Pasadena, California

Individual help from the teacher and from each other



Dorothy P. Kay, Sioux City, Iowa

Learning to read functionally—reading the legends on the science table



National College of Education

Learning to read functionally—reading for information in the reference library



National College of Education

Interpreting to others what one has read

Everychild and Books

IT HAS BEEN OFTEN SAID, and truly, that there is no such thing as "the average child"—that human traits in infinite variety possessed by large numbers of children cannot be added, divided, and converted into one convenient abstraction. There appear to be, however, certain characteristics so prominent and so nearly universal among the young that one may with a degree of truth picture "everychild" as a vivid being, eager, curious, busy, and prone to react in certain ways to his environment. Among the most common of these predictable responses is delight in stories told or read, and absorbed attention given to attractive and suitable books.

That children love certain books is evidenced in countless ways. Painters and sculptors are keen and penetrating observers and interpreters of human nature and they have recorded almost every aspect of child life. They have often used as subject a young reader whose posture and expression denote complete and happy absorption in the pages of a book. Many writers also have attested their own deep enjoyment of favorite books in childhood. In published letters, diaries, and autobiographies, as well as among historical collections, family archives, and cherished keepsakes, books invariably find a place along with toys, games and other beloved objects.

It is a touching and revealing experience to examine closely a collection of worn and battered juveniles from an earlier period. It is so evident that these little old-fashioned books once commanded the affection of their owners and sometimes drew forth loyal praise, though many of them seem to us poor in content and out of key with what we believe to be inherent child nature.

TODAY, in spite of the many rival interests and distractions about which we hear so much, children have not lost their natural affinity for attractive, interesting books. Why, then, is the charge so often made that home, school, and other agencies are failing to develop real readers, true booklovers? It is quite possible that the great masses of our children at school and elsewhere are having scant opportunity to immerse themselves in reading for pure, care-free delight. How many children will this year have a chance to possess or even to enjoy for an hour the new treasures which will soon be issuing from the press? Our best schools and most successful libraries are not talking very much about the distracting effect of modern rivals to reading, but they are redoubling their efforts to bring together the two recognized affinities, children and books, in a stimulating atmosphere free from compulsion where each may discover the other and establish lifelong friendships.—*Annie E. Moore, Formerly Associate Professor of Education, Teachers College, Columbia University.*

A National Disgrace *And a Challenge to American Parents*

VIRTUALLY EVERY CHILD in America is reading color "comic" magazines—a poisonous mushroom growth of the last two years.

Ten million copies of these sex-horror serials are sold every month. One million dollars are taken from the pockets of America's children in exchange for graphic insanity.

Frankly we were not perturbed when we first heard about the rise of the action "comics." We imagined (as do most parents) that they were no worse than the "funnies" in the newspapers. But a careful examination of the 108 periodicals now on the stands shocked us into activity. At least 70 per cent of the total were of a nature no respectable newspaper would think of accepting.

Save for a scattering of more or less innocuous "gag" comics and some reprints of newspaper strips, we found that the bulk of these lurid publications depend for their appeal upon mayhem, murder, torture and abduction—often with a child as the victim. Superman heroics, voluptuous females in scanty attire, blazing machine guns, hooded "justice" and cheap political propaganda were to be found on almost every page.

The old dime novels in which an occasional redskin bit the dust were classic literature compared to the sadistic drivel pouring from the presses today. Badly drawn, badly written and badly printed—a strain on young eyes and young nervous systems—the effect of these pulp-paper nightmares is that of a violent stimulant. Their crude blacks and reds spoil the child's natural sense of color, their hypodermic injection of sex and murder make the child impatient with better, though quieter, stories. Unless we want a coming generation even more ferocious than the present one, parents and teachers throughout America must band together to break the "comic" magazine.

BUT, OF COURSE, the children must be furnished a good substitute. There is nothing dull about *Westward Ho* or *Treasure Island*. Sinbad the Sailor didn't need spinach to effect his feats of strength. The classics are full of humor and adventure—plus good writing. And never before in the history of book publishing have there been so many fine new books for children, or better edited children's magazines.

The shame lies largely with the parents who don't know and don't care what their children are reading. It lies with unimaginative teachers who force stupid, dull twaddle down eager young throats, and, of course, it lies with the completely immoral publishers of the "comics"—guilty of a cultural slaughter of the innocents.

But the antidote to the "comic" magazine poison can be found in any library or good bookstore. The parent (and the teacher—ed.) who does not acquire that antidote for his child is guilty of criminal negligence.—*Sterling North*. (Editorial in *Chicago Daily News*, May 8, 1940)

Education In the News and How to Read It

"Yes, I saw it in the paper, but I didn't think much about it." This comment frequently made by adult readers does not imply lack of reading skill but does indicate failure to take the next step in intelligent reading—to make associations and to see implications. Miss Goodykoontz, assistant commissioner of education, U. S. Office of Education, calls attention to four news accounts which although not labeled education news have significant implications for everyone interested in education. She points out what these implications are, proving that "behind the headlines, lies education." This article is prepared from the address Miss Goodykoontz gave April 29, 1940, at the Milwaukee meeting of the Association for Childhood Education.

I THINK I know what you are saying to yourselves: "Education, news? Does *Education* get into the news? Can it compete with wars, elections, floods, legislatures, the stock market, or even inventions? Can schools make the headlines?" And I hasten to claim that education *is* newspaper stuff—of a kind. If you press me, I'll prove it with a small but growing collection of cartoons about schools. They put education into the newspapers. And try to guess what subject tops the collection! What is the *funniest* thing about American schools? Report cards take the prize. The height of progressivism in the sixties, the basis of home and school cooperation throughout the years, the subject of recent experimen-

tation in hundreds of schools—report cards are still the funniest things the cartoonists know about schools.

Schools are funny in the way they deal with parents, too. That's the next funniest thing, speaking statistically from the evidence of my cartoon collection. Let teachers send notes home, or try to explain Junior's or Sister's behavior, and they land right in the comics. I suppose it's *something* for schools to achieve the funny page; who can say but that this is one good way to stimulate the rare habit of standing off and looking at ourselves.

But other school affairs reach the papers, too. Headings from one issue of one of our Washington morning papers included the following: "Belgian Cabinet Resigns in Split on Education Issue"; "Ignorance Not Stupidity"; "Class Lectures on Wane, Alumni Told"; "Senate Asked for More Aid to Crippled"; "Students to Vie in Speech Contest"; "D. C. Contingent Off for Penn Relays"; "4000 Pupils Cheer Folk Festival."

Yes, education *is* in the news—budgets, new buildings, new appointments, resignations, board decisions, pronouncements of well-known persons—all of these are generously reported in most metropolitan and many small local newspapers.

There is, however, one *other* way to read news about education. Briefly, it is to examine current news for its significance for education—to look *behind* the headline to see what implications its story has for schools. There are numerous books on how to read a newspaper. They emphasize the importance of discrimination, of critical

judgment, of awareness of propaganda, of sales resistance to manufactured news, of reducing reader gullibility. I suggest adding to this list the development of *skill in seeing implications*. To do this, one learns some new reading habits. For one thing, the reader is not *through* when he is *through reading*. Instead, after reading a news column, or editorial, or contributed article he says sternly to himself, "What significance does this have for education in general and for schools specifically?" To show how this works I propose now to take up four fairly recent events which have been treated in the newspapers but not classified under the heading of education news. They will illustrate, I think, a way of seeing the significance of current events in terms of the profession we serve.

A Children's Welfare Conference

To begin with, there is the recent White House Conference on Children in a Democracy which was held in Washington in January of this year. Now applying our new technique of news-reading, what significance is there for education in this conference? A number of things, I think. First, this conference represents a way of studying children—not as learners only, but with their complete home, community, church, and school backgrounds. We see them in their homes with their families. We see the same children on the playgrounds, drawing out books at the libraries, going to Sunday School. We see the social agencies and institutions which exist for their benefit. In other words, the conference reports offer a technique for studying children and their total relationships that may well be adapted to community studies made by school groups. For comparative purposes the basic data will prove useful in studying local situations.

Second, though this is the fourth White House Conference on children's problems, it chalked up a few firsts. It is, so far as I

know, the first one to come out flatfootedly in favor of federal aid. This is noteworthy. An education conference frequently recommends federal aid for schools. School people see the wide variations in opportunities available to children throughout this country. They know of children who *can* go to school only two, three, or four months because that is as long as the school is open. School people see schools in which there is not even *one book apiece* for the children. They know of schools whose total annual expenditure per child, including heat, is \$20 a year. School people know that not much education, or a very good grade of education can be bought for \$20. And so conferences of *school* people frequently plead for more equitable distribution of educational facilities. But this Conference on Children in a Democracy was not a teachers' conference, though some teachers were present. It was made up of social workers, physicians, ministers, recreation leaders, nurses, librarians, and representatives of public service groups. *They* recommended that federal funds be used to provide more equitable school advantages for children. That is significant, I think.

Another first to the credit of this conference, so far as I have been able to discover, is that it was the first one to emphasize *religious education*. Other conferences have dealt with ethical aspects of children's training, with character education, and other closely related problems. This conference gave thorough consideration to children's need for religious teaching, and the conference closed with the recommendation that a commission be appointed to make a study of "the various experiences both of the churches and of the schools in dealing with the problem of religious education in relation to public education." The report calls attention to the relation of religion to personal counseling, to the development of wholesome attitudes in very young children. This is interesting to school people,

for probably no problem has caused schools more concern than that of character development. Not so many years ago, courses of study divided character neatly into segments and worked on one segment each month—neatness in September, courtesy in October, gratitude in November, generosity in December. It's just slipped my mind what we emphasized in June, but I think it may have been resignation. Of course we're not doing this any more. We think we understand more surely that character development is not something separate and apart, nor is it a concern only of the schools. Obviously, if and when this commission to study religious education gets under way, teachers will be greatly interested, for they will see in it a means of analyzing and improving their present procedures for personality adjustments.

Just one more significant point for schools, though there could be many. The preliminary conference recognized responsibilities of children as well as for children in a democracy. They must perfect and maintain the principles for which a free country stands. They must learn to do their part. Unfortunately, it seems to me, too little attention was given to this side of the slate in the conference reports.

And yet this is no new territory for the teachers of young children. They are putting aside such well-known expressions as the following: "Everybody pay attention—Now listen while I tell you what to do—Miss Jones wouldn't like that—Now let's all do this the same way—This is what I'd like to have you do—Everybody sit tall, and wait until the clock ticks." These are gone, and new expressions are finding their way into teachers' phraseology: "What do you think we ought to do about this?—Who would like to take charge of that?—Shall we have a committee to work this out?—How well do you think we did this job?—What would you advise me to do about this?" These ex-

pressions and the point of view they represent may seem a far cry from the preservation of democracy, but really they are the basis of democratic ways of thinking and working. They start the attitudes and practices of democracy—a rare flower which blossoms close to the ground. In my opinion, then, this conference on Children in a Democracy, though not an education conference, had great significance for persons interested as we are in the education of young children.

Latin-American Fellowships

Now a second matter—a very different one—that is in the news. You have been reading with increasing frequency lately of conferences on intellectual cooperation with the Latin-American countries. Down in Buenos Aires in 1936, a long step forward was taken when the convention for the promotion of Inter-American Cultural Relations was signed by the representatives of the United States of America and the twenty other American Republics represented at the Inter-American Conference for the Maintenance of Peace.

The Convention, which is another name for resolution, provides for the annual exchange of graduate students and teachers between each of the Republics which have ratified the Convention, of which there are now twelve, including the United States. Under this Convention every year each Government shall have the privilege of nominating and presenting to each other a panel of the names of five graduate students or teachers, together with such information concerning them as the receiving Government considers necessary. From this panel the receiving Government shall select the names of two persons who will then be appointed exchange students. There are already exchange students in Chile, and panels prepared by the United States have recently been drawn up for this spring. Possibly within the next few

months students and exchange professors from this country will be on their way to several Latin-American countries and students from those countries will be coming to us. Many agencies already arrange for student and professor exchanges. These, however, are government exchanges and are recognized as contributing to national welfare.

Now what does this phase of intellectual cooperation mean for education? For one thing, it means obviously that we shall soon have a better understanding of the opportunities for study in our neighbor republics. We shall know what educational offerings the universities of Latin America have in the various fields. This is not an opportune time for an "Information Please" quiz, but sometime try to name four large universities of Central and South America. In which ones could you study child development? Which ones have child health departments? Which offer courses in education? Which ones have sessions during our summer months? In which languages is instruction given? We shall soon know the answers to these questions.

Furthermore, before long we shall hear at firsthand from some of these exchange students and professors of the history, the culture, and the current situation in their countries. Soon, let us hope, we shall speak with as much familiarity of the people and conditions of our neighbor countries to the south as we now speak of those across the Atlantic. It will be interesting to meet and know some of the persons from Latin-American countries interested in the improvement of education and living conditions for young children. We have much to learn from them. They think they have much to learn from us, judging from comments that have been made by visitors in recent months.

The Association for Childhood Education has evidenced keen interest in the progress of education for young children

in other countries. Your members have visited abroad and have returned to report what they found in the pages of CHILDHOOD EDUCATION. It is not out of place, it seems to me, to urge that when the new exchange visitors arrive, persons in the universities and public schools do everything to make their study and their visits to nursery schools, kindergartens, and primary grades as profitable as may be. This is cultural cooperation, American style.

In-service Training for Public Employees

Only a week ago headlines flashed the third news item I have selected as having significance for education. It was a challenge by one government agency of the right of another government agency to provide facilities for the training and improvement of its employees. Can, and should, a government department provide in-service training facilities? Impetus to the idea was given by an executive order signed by the President on June 24, 1938, in which two items significant for education are to be found.

The first provided that the head of each executive department and independent establishment should provide in his agency a division of personnel supervision and management, at the head of which is to be a director of personnel qualified by training and experience to carry on personnel responsibilities. Among these responsibilities is that of supervising the *training* of employees. Government departments are expected, therefore, to improve the personnel on the job. Furthermore, the Civil Service Commission, in cooperation with the various departments, the Office of Education, and public and private institutions of learning were, by this executive order directed to establish training courses for such improvement of the departmental and field services.

Now what does *this* mean for education? First, the program of employee train-

ing invites education agencies to join with government in a public service. Throughout our history, government has repeatedly turned to schools and colleges for assistance on programs which concerned the national welfare. This is one more such request for assistance. Furthermore, it subscribes to the principle of "study while you work," which teachers have long practiced.

It is easy to see, too, that such a program of training adds prestige to the trained public servant. Who can say what long-time effects there might be if, within each civil unit in this country, training for the job of running local government were thus given added respectability? It would mean that public officials in many fields would expect schools to help in analyzing the responsibilities of public service and in giving new officers some background for their work. It will be worthwhile to watch during the months to come what progress, even though slow, is made in the development of this idea. Where will you see training courses for policemen, firemen, governors, members of boards of education, county supervisors? Do we intend through education to make our governmental machinery work better? You may soon see the answers in your universities, in night and vocational schools.

National Youth Conference

Youth are headline stuff in recent years. They hold conferences, elect officers, draft bills, organize movements, print their own newspapers, and in numerous ways make us conscious of the age group somewhere around sixteen to twenty-four. Commissions and committees study them. Books are printed about them. Adults call conferences to discuss their problems. Everywhere we read and hear about youth. In it all it sometimes seems to me that in the minds of most people, *youth* and *young men* are synonymous. Possibly the problems of young men are more serious than

those of young women, or boys may be noisier about their problems. At any rate, it was interesting to have called in Washington recently a conference to discuss youth—feminine gender.

The conference met at the White House for two days in February, called by the National Youth Administration. A number of young people now or recently on NYA rolls came as representatives to the conference to tell us their stories. A young girl who had graduated from high school with honors had been trying to keep afloat by doing housework at a dollar and a half a week until the NYA sent her to one of the residence centers and helped her get training for a job. Another girl from the dust bowl of Kansas had been an honor student in the elementary school but couldn't go to high school because there had been no crops on her farm since 1929. From Chicago came a young woman to tell of tramping the streets to find a job, and of meeting with repeated discrimination in spite of good school records. Always the same answer, "You have no skills to sell." Apparently their education, good though it probably was, did not help them take the next step.

Now we have recently celebrated the hundredth anniversary of higher education for women in our country. It was a long struggle to secure the right to *equal education* for girls and women. Sometimes I think we are still so busily fighting the battle of *equal* education, or so complacent about celebrating its achievement that we have not been as busy as we should be about the matter of studying the "specialized problems of the education of girls and women. I hasten to state that by this I do not mean that education for boys and girls is necessarily of a different grade. I mean only to puzzle myself, and you, a little as to whether there should not be *some* differences, because of the fact that women's activities in adult life are bound to be

somewhat different from those of men. They will have different responsibilities. They will go into different lines of work. They have some specialized interests. To what extent can those be reflected in the special educational preparation they receive? Now that we are beginning the next hundred years of women's education, maybe we may make some more intelligent investigation of the preparation girls need to have for the successful acceptance of their adult responsibilities.

We are told by economists that solving the unemployment problem waits upon the development of new types of services. Possibly schools can analyze and define new fields of employment around schools for which young people can be trained. If a school is a community institution, during what hours does it serve the community? What proportion of the people in the community does it serve? What facilities—recreational, health, entertainment, informational—are available through its offices? What would be necessary to change it from a nine to four institution for children, to a community-serving agency? And would this provide employment for persons not now otherwise employed? At any rate, the news will continue to feature young people and their concerns; they will continue to be a challenge to schools.

Well, what do you think about reading the news this way? A children's welfare

conference, some Latin-American fellowships, the training of public employees, a youth conference. Some may say, "Certainly a long way from schools!"

But the day is past, if indeed it ever existed, when the school's resources and contacts were neatly enclosed by the barberry hedge surrounding the school grounds. This is only the home plate. Where is something of community interest going on? There is the school's subject matter. Where are there resources in music, pictures, plays, exhibits to put beauty and meaning into vocabulary? There are the school's teaching materials. Where can children go to see things happening—to see economics, geology, government in action?

Stuart Chase recently remarked that "none of us is likely to get anywhere at all in this intricate, interdependent civilization the engineers have built around us until we learn the *rudiments* of *thinking straight*. They are not hard to learn," he said. "They are just unusual."

"Unusual?" we retort. "Unusual to think straight? Why, how ridiculous!" But if it is so, we'll begin now to think straight about the size and ramifications of our job, about our communities' *many* educational enterprises. We'll see their interconnections, their relations to schools. For to paraphrase a rallying call more than two thousand years old, "behind the headlines, lies education."

IN GENERAL it may be said that teachers are becoming more liberal . . . (they) seem to be moving from a somewhat conservative position to a middle-of-the-road position with some liberal ideas on certain issues—religion, social security, civil liberties, wealth and property rights, and capital and labor. Progressive thought is also evident in the field of education, although teachers believe in the indoctrination of a blind patriotism more now than in 1922.—From "The Political, Social and Economic Beliefs of California Secondary Teachers," by William E. Froggatt and William H. Burton. *Frontiers of Democracy*, May 15, 1940.

Literature — An Art

Rose H. Alschuler, director of WPA nursery schools, Chicago, and Flora Cooke, former principal of the Francis Parker School, have given CHILDHOOD EDUCATION permission to print this talk made by Mrs. Thorne-Thomsen to the Chicago WPA Nursery Schools. Mrs. Alschuler says of Mrs. Thorne-Thomsen: "Many years ago I saw her teach a group of children at the Francis Parker School in Chicago. I thought at the time that she was the greatest teacher I had ever seen work with little children. I watched her draw on her seemingly endless resources of knowledge, wisdom, and vitality and I wished that there were more Gudrun Thorne-Thomsens in the world. Unfortunately there is only one. In reality, education as she offers it, literature as she tells about it, and life as she lives it, are all of them arts of which she is master."

For some years Mrs. Thorne-Thomsen directed Edward Yeoman's School in the Ojai Valley in California. At present, in so far as we know, she is in Norway.

WHEN MAN was young upon this earth, he sang forth his joys and sorrows. In stately rhythms he told of his struggles, of love and hatred, of life and death. We are aware of the fact that the earliest literature, which we know, is poetry, and that it was recited to the audience, often accompanied by the music of a stringed instrument. I refer to the sagas of the North, to Homer's great epics and to the psalms and songs of the Bible.

Those who know children of nursery school age know a child's response to rhythm whether it be spoken words, bodily movements or song. All who have had to do with babies have noted the pleasure, the peace and contentment that rhythm brings. We have discarded cradles, but the baby's cries are stilled even in these modern times by the rhythmic movement and comfort of the father's or mother's arms and by the softly sung lullaby. In their response to rhythm of movement and of melody children are like all primitive people. Wherever they have left us their songs, games, and stories, we may either use them with our children or learn from them the secret of this primitive art.

Mothers and teachers do well to study the epics of Homer, the sagas of the Norsemen, the psalms and songs from the Bible. They will learn there the magic of rhyme and rhythm, the pleasure in alliteration and the stateliness of parallelism.

Long ago song—that is the art of music; words—that is literature, and rhythmic movement—that is the dance, were united. The folk danced and sang their stories for their own pleasure, and those who became experts did it for the pleasure of others. This folk art which has come down to us in singing games might well be used more widely and might also serve as a pattern on which to build our own. There are singing games of the farmer, the weaver, the shoe-maker, of all the various occupations in the home and in the work shop. There are the individual games such as, "Come Ride a Cock Horse", "Pat-a-cake, Pat-a-cake", and group games such as "Here We Go Round the Mulberry Bush" and "Pop

Goes the Weasel"—always favorites.

Not long ago I saw a group of women from the Hebrides dancing a saga—that is telling a story, chanting and dancing in a ring with stately steps, bending now and then to the measures of their song. Though few of the audience understood the words, the performance made a lasting impression.

At the nursery school stage of development it seems fit to emphasize rhythm and pleasing sounds rather than the content of a verse. Mother Goose is a never failing source of such material. Here we find pure nonsense, gayety and fun, little ballads rich in alliteration and rhythms. Many have come to us with melodies and may be sung and acted.

The child himself creates and as he hears simple rhythmic music he may invent words and dance. He should be given the chance every day. There is probably no joy to equal that of creating. You may observe it when a child has expressed himself in free rhythms, when he repeats over and over again a pattern he himself has made up, or you may watch it when a group comes home after an excursion to tell of what they saw.

I saw apples,
Round red apples
Rosy red apples
All in a row.

Round, red, rosy, row are exciting words and will be repeated over and over again by the children who invented the lines, their faces aglow with the joy of creation. If every day brings fitting, satisfying experiences to the children they have much to express and will do it in all art forms if they are given materials and the opportunity for expression. Many rhythmic stories will come spontaneously from the children in this way.

Some modern writers have caught the child's spirit and given us poetry altogether satisfying to children of this age. Among

them we have Milne, who writes of matters close to the child's experience or of experiences we should be glad to have him have. For instance, "I had a penny, a bright new penny"—it is easy to create before the child's mind the market with its sights and sounds. Here is the stall of lavender, there one for sauce pans, and the mackerels are over there. The teacher repeats the poem while children act it and in no time all have learned the words by heart. We find fitting verses here and there among Robert Louis Stevenson's *Child's Garden of Verse*. There is Christine Rosetti's *Sing Song*; even Vachel Lindsay gives us one—"There was a little turtle, who lived in a box." Teachers must constantly explore and find those poems or stories which are best suited to the experience of the children.

Satisfying Imaginative Powers

In the fairy-tale animals are endowed with human characteristics and the power of speech. All things animate or inanimate are like humans, doing what they do because they will to do so. In this particular kind of fancy the child resembles the early people who first told fairy tales. To the child all nature is alive and acts from motives such as actuate himself. In the fairy tale nothing is impossible; in the child's wishing and dreaming, in his imagination nothing is impossible.

When the child asks, "Tell me a story", he expresses a desire to learn more of the world, to get at the heart of things, to come into personal intimate contact with life. The fairy tale expresses his unconscious longings, hopes, and struggles. It speaks to him in a language he understands. It gives expression to that which he feels but dimly and sees but darkly. Through it he catches glimpses of laws governing human life. It interprets his own thoughts to himself, it gives him a perspective of his world and unconsciously influences his actions. Of course we must know how to choose right-

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ly among the chaos of fairy tales in books.

The same principles as those directing our choice of poetry should direct our choice of story. Stories should be chosen that present ideas within the child's experience or such ideas as we think he is ready for. There should be rhythm in prose. The repetitive stories such as *The Woman and Her Six Pence*, *The Pan-cake* and *The Three Billy Goats Gruff* are types. We find in these literary form, events closely following each other in logical sequence, and a simple plot carried to a natural climax. The folk believed in what they told, therefore the old folk fairy-tales are sincere, convincing, and the best have great charm.

Teachers must be well prepared for the

privilege of choosing literary material and for the still greater privilege of reciting poems and telling stories to children. Everything depends on the teacher's tastes, her knowledge of literature, and her knowledge of children's minds and emotions.

Teachers must recognize what is art and what is not. When the child asks for bread, he must not be given a stone. As the interpreter of literature the teacher must aim at a clear understanding of her chosen bit, and she must care for it and must want to give the children the pleasure it should arouse. She will be direct and unaffected, avoiding all sentimentality. Only that which is sincere will produce the response the teacher as an artist expects.

By ELOISE RAMSEY

Recovering Lost Horizons

What effects do past experiences have upon the reading interests and tastes of today's adults? What present school practices form barriers to the development of interest in reading? What are the responsibilities of the individual teacher, parents, and teacher education for stimulating a desire to read and for developing an appreciation of literature?

Miss Ramsey, senior assistant professor of English literature, Wayne University, Detroit, gives some answers to these questions.

TODAY general opinion among teachers inclines to the view that educational changes on the whole spell improvement. Records of achievement, research studies, and reports of work in progress seem to substantiate this comfortable outlook. Current educational discussion keeps this note

of optimism until reading is mentioned. Immediately enter notes of uncertainty, difference of opinion, and not a little confusion. Particularly there is reiteration of statements such as, "children are not reading well," "children are not reading really fine books," "literary horizons seem to be disappearing, yet reading is much better taught now than it was in the past."

In an age committed to educational improvement through scientific experimentation it is curious that assurance as to greater efficiency in the teaching of reading should be accompanied by misgivings as to quality in the literary experiences of young readers. It is also strange to hear that "literary horizons seem to be disappearing" in a period that has been marked by the widest distribution of books and the most avid will-to-write for children known in the history of children's literature. In seeking an

explanation, at least in part, for this seeming contradiction between improved ways of teaching and dubious end-results, it is useful to look behind the present.

Past Experiences in Reading

Discussion of reading is in the air these days, as well as sometimes on the air. Probably at no previous time have there been so many individuals thinking about, or trying to think about, reading. It is particularly interesting to follow the discussions of well-educated men and women in their late twenties, thirties and forties. Many of these thoughtful, capable adults blame their past experiences with books and reading both in school and at college for their present inadequacy in reading and their lack of well-formed literary tastes. According to their own accounts, they somehow failed to acquire any sure knowledge of how to choose books for themselves, or to garner assimilated reading experiences through the "great reading years," as Elinor Wylie once described childhood and adolescence.

Now it is well to remember that the majority of our teachers are also products of the same systems and institutions so sharply criticized by other graduates for shortcomings, if not failure, with respect to reading in its larger sense. Nor is it possible to assume that future teachers may have succeeded in reaping benefits which others failed to receive.

Observation of teaching in the elementary school forces the unwelcome conclusion that there are a good many teachers in service whose reading performance rests on the level of literacy rather than on achievement in the practice of reading as an art. That is to say, facility in the use of tricks of literacy such as "skimming the page," "picking out key words," "getting some general idea" has been accepted as proof of superior attainments, although a mastery of such rudimentary skills stops

considerably short of reading in terms of analysis of thought, of finding conscious pleasure in literary and familiar associations, and for communication of style. In the elementary school, to say nothing of the secondary school, failure on the part of many teachers to understand the processes which render practice in reading an art offers a large part of the explanation as to why the literary horizons of childhood are overcast.

Barriers to a Literary Heritage

Let us consider briefly how limitations in understanding the large significance of reading tends to influence actual work with children. In recent years the application of mass production methods in the teaching of reading has increased steadily in the face of abundant evidence that a mastery of reading is essentially an individual process. Children may or may not have a basis in firsthand experience for interpretation of reading materials, but no matter, they engage in "experience" reading, mechanically conceived and organized. In the process they work as best they can with far too many techniques of "speed" and "check-up" expended upon thin, ephemeral content designed in the brittle language of selective word-lists. Immediate achievement in close competition with his fellows thus becomes the burden too often put upon the young child in his first encounters with the printed page.

In concern for individual differences, a class may be divided into "groups", but with each group the pace is set for speed. Because the content of the reading materials provided has to do with everyday routines or happenings—post-offices, grocery stores, or boats—it is assumed "experience" reading is in progress.

The first step in understanding the larger aspects of reading may come by way of elimination of all pressures for "speed" in the individual acquisition of skill; the

second, with realization that "experience" is not necessarily pre-occupation with a humdrum interpretation of the familiar.

Visits in and about elementary schools reveal also a most discouraging lack of experiences basic in forming literary taste in childhood: sharing good talk in a friendly, informal atmosphere; listening to fine verse and tales over and over again; getting the feel of books by handling them freely; discovering the "old sweet-sounding words" and idioms of our beautiful language. Reading aloud now and then from contemporary books is no substitute for fine storytelling by the teacher. Gay new books have their uses but they do not replace growing up with the books that are classic for young children. These are the experiences that are fundamental for a development of taste in reading, yet at all stages of growth they are the ones that are most left to chance in curriculum planning, if not wholly neglected.

In the intermediate grades there is considerable mention of "free" reading. At the same time there seems to be much anxiety about evidences of "reading lag". Again it is strange that "lag" should occur at the stage when children normally rejoice in exploring many kinds of books and often read with complete absorption.

It is well to consider how "free" reading may work. According to the meaning attached to the term "free", such an approach to reading may open vistas or it may set patterns. Sometimes books arrive in classrooms neatly packed in kits, chests or book boxes bearing labels meant to be alluring such as, "Interesting People", "Adventures on Land and Sea", "Tales of Animals", and "Children in Warm Countries". Of course the little devices for distribution introduce more mechanics by reason of the directions that govern their use. Within the limits offered by the titles of a particular collection there may be some opportunities for choice, but generally an in-

formational pattern is set. In short, a mechanistic organization of reading materials deals with literature from without or with its surface aspects; a genuinely literary approach shows an understanding that the appreciation of literature, no less than its creation, comes from within.

With development of literary taste there is a realization that reading represents a form of collaboration between author and reader. If literary horizons are to be established in a classroom, books must be easily and properly accessible on suitable tables and shelves shorn of labels of classification. Books so arranged invite the kind of investigation which is the first condition of free reading, and foster the intimate kind of reading which is for children discovery and exploration.

With the older boys and girls, as with the younger children, there is too little time devoted to good conversation, to real storytelling, and to the kind of reading aloud which is the communication of a style. Too often the business of making reports *about* books gets in the way of provision for basic literary experiences. Consequently, it is hardly a matter for surprise that children become bored or discouraged and seek satisfaction in amusements or occupations far removed from books.

If these hindrances and barriers to full possession of the literary heritage of childhood are to be broken down, much depends on the individual teacher. For realization of the larger aspects of reading in the classroom it is vital to have the sensitive, informed teacher with a gift of companionship with children and a wealth of associations with the literature which has charm and significance for young readers.

The Responsibility of Teacher Education

In concern for the literary horizons of childhood and youth it becomes necessary to look squarely at certain inadequacies in teacher education. So long as we continue

to accept twenty-four credits in "education" interlarded with snatches of learning designated as "culture" courses in lieu of essential experiences and backgrounds, we tend to ignore the fact that *education is a process, not a subject*. However freely we may discuss the educational process, in practice it threatens to become a subject of vast and attenuated scope. It is easier to permit the multiplication of courses in "education" than it is to provide experiences which enable prospective teachers to learn how to live with children. Similarly, it is easier to let the arts and sciences shrink into lecture-quiz bits of "orientation" and swift "surveys" of culture reinforced with scanty "free" electives than it is to provide at college level for the kind of individual teaching which illumines the record of "man on his way" and insures the perpetuation of the cultural process.

Nowhere are the unhappy effects of this clash between theory and practice more in evidence in teacher education than in the provision for literary backgrounds essential for work with children. Sometimes children's literature comes in for brief attention from departments of English as an unwanted child; sometimes it is accorded a sentimental treatment under the designation, storytelling; again it appears in a sketchy unit in courses devoted to reading methods; and in some instances it is relegated to unwieldy lists prepared for the casual use of students. In a few institutions, a *very few*, it has its proper place in teacher education in courses of scope and significance supported with adequate equipment.

Until there is generally better provision for broadly cultural and extended study of children's literature in schools and colleges of education, many aspects of the reading problems that give concern to educators are likely to remain very much as they exist today.

In the meantime, responsibility for a better order in the uses of books and read-

ing in the schools depends largely upon the vision and background of the thoughtful teacher. For this important work it is necessary to have a clear-cut point of view as to what children's literature represents and to possess informed standards for sound critical appraisal. More than all else, teachers need to realize that *there are great books for children*. To grow up with them is to win the rewards in time that make reading one of life's enduring pleasures.

The Responsibilities of Teachers and Parents

Books in the great tradition of children's literature have one characteristic in common—they possess that wholeness of intention found only in writing in which there is complete harmony between idea and form. The range in theme and variety is so wide that there is satisfaction for all personal preferences. Experiences with literature deepen with the years for readers whose early reading adventures bring them into close companionship with the work of authors such as Howard Pyle, Lewis Carroll, Rudyard Kipling, Edward Lear, E. Nesbit, Hans Christian Andersen, Mark Twain, and more recently, A. A. Milne, Pamela Travers, Wanda Gág, Margery Bianco, and Walter de la Mare.

The literary horizons of childhood are resplendent with fun, fancy, wonder, and enchantment. There are no good reasons why the experiences of children with literature should ever become dull or colorless. That they are too often less significant than they should be reflects the limitations of adults more than the attitudes and tastes of children.

For adults interested in children's literature it is not a simple matter to keep a critical perspective in face of the flood of new children's books that threatens to engulf young readers in a sea of print. Since the preliminary sorting-out of this mass of material is obviously an adult responsi-

bility, it is well to remember that newness in itself is not a criterion of quality and that the distinguished book for children has always been rare. The excellent make-up and illustrations of contemporary children's books fascinate older readers to the point that they forget that themes in writing for children do not change greatly.

Unhappily, adult ideas as to what a child's book should offer in the way of illumination have not altered materially in spite of the better understanding of children modern psychology has given us. For proof, there is much to be learned by selecting at random ten or more of the newer informational books and by reading them comparatively with *Sandford and Merton*, *Rosamund*, and *Evenings At Home*. Didacticism in writing for children did not pass with Thomas Day, Maria Edgeworth, and Mrs. Barbauld.

Especially do teachers need to know the characteristics of derivative and imitative writing for children. In an age that has accorded genuine recognition to the professional writer for children, it is inevitable that facility in catching surface appearances and diligence in research should be substituted for imagination and originality. For the better critical appraisal of children's books, it is useful to keep in mind what Kipling said concerning his imitators: "My jungle books begat zoos of them."

Fortunately there are a few classrooms in which companionship with great books is a living reality that children are experiencing day-by-day. In such a classroom the appearance of *It's Perfectly True*, the new

translation of Han Christian Andersen's wonder stories by Paul Leyssac, offered the delight of a renewal of associations with a favorite author. Comparing versions of these famous tales afforded a fresh interest in them. Many of the best-loved tales were read in several versions with an observation of detail and feeling for shades of meaning that would have done credit to much older readers. Some children liked the quaintness of older renderings; others admired the greater precision of the more recent translations by M. R. James and R. P. Keigwin. They were quick to appreciate the direct conversational note Leyssac has caught in his translation. Since some of the children wished to purchase editions of Andersen for themselves, they read and compared versions with a view of deciding on *the one* they would own. Illustrations had due consideration, but decisions hinged on the choice of a satisfactory text.

In the course of this most enjoyable reading of Andersen's stories an exhibit was arranged including copies of all available editions. The exhibit had particular interest for a boy who had been in the class only a short time, and to whom this kind of an experience with an author was new, though exciting. He picked up a caption from the exhibit which read, "Hans Christian Andersen, 1805-1875", and exclaimed, "Why, he's dead!" One of the girls, a rarely sensitive child, responded quickly, "But he had *wonder*. and when you have wonder you never die."

And for children who have wonder there are no lost horizons.

Hold fast to dreams

For if dreams die

Life is a broken-winged bird

That cannot fly.

Hold fast to dreams

For when dreams go

Life is a barren field

Frozen with snow.

From "Dreams" by Langston Hughes. *The Dream Keeper and Other Poems* (Knopf).

How Can We Give Children Joy in Good Books?

Since the responsibility for developing children's interest in books lies with adults and not with the children, how can we be sure that we are giving the best guidance possible in the reading programs we plan for them? Miss Smith, professor of education at the University of Minnesota, gives suggestions which teachers and parents will find useful.

"DUCK!" said the two-year-old explosively with the suddenness of a cork popping out of a toy gun. Then raising both arms and pointing dramatically in the direction of the pond, he gave a prolonged excited gasp of delight and added, "Two-o-o ducks!" That was an event of the first magnitude for he was learning the names of all the fascinating objects in his daily experience, and none was more captivating than animals.

Half an hour later he sat on the floor with a linen book before him. "Duck!" he ejaculated once more, as he found his own familiar experience repeated for him at home in his picture book. Then with a second shout of delight and vigorously patting the page where the ducks appeared, he added with the same prolonged gasp of pleasure, "Two-o-o ducks!" No word was printed on the page, but the child's interest in books was assured. He had learned the joy of experiencing through reading.

Keep Close to the Child's Experiences

Mothers have a special privilege and responsibility because they are with children in all the informal experiences of their waking hours. Teachers are learning more

and more the importance of reproducing in the schoolroom activities similar to those outside the school. The time for a poem about a pigeon is not between ten minutes of arithmetic and ten minutes of spelling. It is when a pigeon waddles its way across the walk to peck at the crumbs left for it by a delighted child:

Mrs. Peck-Pigeon
Is picking for bread,
Bob-bob-bob
Goes her little round head.¹

No child can have those lines read to him with the right accent without sensing their inimitable mimicking of the awkward strut of the pigeon. His own experience will be deepened and imbued with new joy and meaning. At the same time he will learn from it an unconscious appreciation of poetry and what it has to offer him.

Similarly the time for a book about a steam-shovel is when the huge monster opens its jaws on the neighboring bank. The time for a story like *The Umbrella That Got Wet* is when the five-year-old proudly promenades with her new parasol on a sunshiny day when it is sure to be safe from rain; and the time for a story about *Spunky*, the circus pony, or *Wait for William*, whose older brothers and sisters left him far behind in their zeal to catch up with the circus parade, is when the billboard displays the alluring clowns and inevitable pink ladies, and the lumbering elephant with his richly brocaded howdah. The right book for the right child is a

¹ Farjeon, Eleanor, "Mrs. Peck-Pigeon," in *Sung Under the Silver Umbrella, Poems for Young Children*, p. 98. Selected by the Literature Committee of the Association for Childhood Education, Macmillan, 1935.

slogan which may well be extended to include the right time also.

A six-year-old entered the library with a worried look on his face. "Tommy brought his turtle to school today, and we don't know what to give it to eat. Miss Eaton," he asked anxiously, "is there a book about what turtles eat?" There *was*, of course, and he ran off with it to have his teacher locate the information for him. There *are* books about the things that interest children. That is one of the most important discoveries a young child can make in the field of reading. There is *fun* in books; there is *life* in books; and there are *answers to all the questions* which abound in the lives of young readers everywhere.

Often a mother's chief anxiety is to do something at home to prepare her child for reading before he goes to school. Conscientiously, though mistakenly, she teaches him the alphabet with that end in view, or she helps him to pick out the *and's* and the *the's* in the newspaper; and somehow or other she gives him the impression that reading is *hard* and one must *work* when he gets into first grade. The biggest thing a mother or teacher can do for a child to make reading easier for him is to give him constant and happy associations with books as a source of sheer fun and enjoyment, as a means of reliving the experiences which please him most, as an avenue of new and unexpected experiences, and as a storehouse of the information he most desires concerning the world about him.

For the young child from two to four, the simpler the pictures and the stories the better. Cats that look like cats—not cats in pink sunbonnets and gorgeous aprons—but cats that stand out clearly on a page with little background so that he may identify them readily. The *Little Black Sambo* he wants has simple pictures, clearly outlined on a white mat so that he may rejoice in the shoes on the tiger's ears without having them made indistinct by a mass

of shapeless jungle greenery in the background. Pigs—luscious pigs with personality, like those of Leslie Brooke in *The Three Little Pigs*—will capture his imagination. Minor details will not interest him at that moment, but bold, clear-cut figures on a comparatively plain background will. Gradually it will be possible to lead out from the experiences with which he is familiar to those which can come to him only through books, for they belong to the realm of the imagination.

It is obvious, then, that the first step in any program of reading guidance is to keep close to the individual and his experiences. The second is to become acquainted with children's books so that one may know instantly the kind of experiences each one offers, for only in that way can one capitalize upon the interests of the moment and lead on to new and valuable experiences of another sort.

Become Acquainted With the Experiences Books Offer

Has the child been out in the fields and become interested in the tiny creatures of the grass? If so, *Let's Go Outdoors* by Huntington and Preston will add immensely to his pleasure in them whether he is five years old or ten. Has he acquired a new kitten such as no other boy ever possessed? Then *Millions of Cats* will send him singing its refrain behind the davenport, over the swing, and under the garden hedges in pursuit of his very own. Is *Angus and the Ducks* his favorite among dog stories? Then *Buttons*, the little dog with the big bark, should arouse equal enthusiasm in him. Or was it Angus's curiosity to see the world that caused the spontaneous chuckles? If so, what will he think of a duck with a well-developed bump of curiosity in *The Story About Ping*? Or more startling still, a toad who "wanted to see the world" in *A Roundabout Turn*? With Ping he enters a new world in the Orient

and with the toad experiences the sensations of "seventy-nine rides" on a merry-go-round, each book in turn suggesting new and alluring leads for further reading.

Have the boys in the middle years reached the "swapping" stage? If so, in *Copper-Toed Boots* they will find one origin of that habit in the trading ventures of pioneer communities where money was scarce. Then perhaps, when they have finished with northern Michigan, they may be enticed to try *The Norwegian Farm* where Einar and his brothers engaged in the same swapping enterprises, even to the extent of exchanging cows. Whoever reads the exploits of these rural children will never again forget the cow who went down the ski jump on Christmas day and landed in a heap of cow and boys, so that the frightened onlookers could scarcely tell whose legs were which.

There are times when reading a short selection and then letting someone complete the book and report to the other children how the story ends is worth more than reading the same book to a large group of children over a considerable period of time. In this way one may sample such widely different contributions as *The Hobbit* with its delightfully casual acceptance of magic—not really magic, you know—but merely "the everyday sort which helps Hobbits disappear quietly and quickly when large stupid folk like you and me come blundering along, making a noise like elephants which they can hear a mile off," or Charles Boardman Hawes's *The Mutineers* with its pirates and sea fights, and Mabel Leigh Hunt's *Benjie's Hat*, based upon the everyday semi-humorous and semi-tragic experiences of the little boy who slipped out of the Quaker Meeting House where he had gone with his grandmother, and had his straw hat quietly eaten off his head by a leisurely horse grazing over the fence against which he was leaning as he wondered if the long period of silence

was at an end and if he dare return.

Sometimes in school we find an interesting theme around which boys and girls will enjoy reading. The introduction to Walden's *Igloo* is a choice, short essay by Commander Byrd on the intelligence of animals. It could be read aloud easily in five or ten minutes, and would send any intermediate grade class on a run to the library in search of the many stories of animals which prove Byrd was right. "The Letter to Colonel Boone," which introduces James Daugherty's Newbery prize biography, read aloud for its delightful rhythm and imaginative quality will open up the whole realm of stories of those who shared Boone's vision and spirit of adventure. Or perhaps children will prefer to make a map of good stories they have read about different parts of the world, or posters with road signs showing the direction of their travels to other countries through books. What a wealth of excellent material is available about China, for example, beginning with *The Story About Ping* for the littlest ones and leading on up through *Mei Lei* and *Little Pear* to *Ho-Ming*, *Girl of New China*, and *Young Fu of the Upper Yangtze*!

But often it is the single title attractively displayed that wins readers. *All Sail Set* alongside the model of a ship; *One-String Fiddle* or *The Boy Builder* in the midst of a display of things children have made; *Black, Bay, and Chestnut* under the latest news item of the Kentucky derby, or *Dru-silla* in the dolls' corner of the playhouse. Often an interest in poetry is best aroused by a single poem, typed and mounted on a piece of cardboard beneath a picture—the "whisky, frisky squirrel", for example, beside a photograph of him coming down from the tree top. Devices of this sort are more common in libraries than in school-rooms but use of them, fortunately, is daily becoming more customary in both.

Develop An Increasing Satisfaction in Reading

One of the chief obstacles to the development of reading interests among boys and girls is a feeling on the part of parents and teachers that there are certain books which all children really *ought* to read. We need to keep clearly in mind the fact that *no single book is so important as to warrant reading at the expense of the development of a voluntary habit of good reading.* Our major problem is *to stimulate in boys and girls a desire to read and a habit of choosing increasingly worthwhile books.* Some children will achieve standards as high as Kenneth Grahame's *Wind in the Willows*. Others never will, and should not be expected to do so. The imaginative is not all there is of value in books, and each type of reading significant in life should have a recognized place in the reading experience of children.

Dr. Briggs is fond of telling the story of the engine that puffed and puffed its way to the top of the mountain with its load of heavy freight cars. Like the little engine in the story book, it thought it could, and it did. Breathless, hot, and oily, it reached its destination, heaved a sigh of real satisfaction, and then glanced over its shoulder only to discover that the freight cars were still at the foot of the mountain. The couplers had never been fastened. Only when we start where boys and girls are, when we gain their confidence by relating their reading experiences with what they understand and with what has significance for them at the moment can we hope to fasten the couplers securely enough to lead on up the mountain.

This problem of the development of taste and appreciation is not one of getting more and more boys and girls to read a certain few books of definitely recognized literary merit. No great exponents of culture down through the years have ever defined it in terms of checking off set books

to be read by everyone. They have described it in terms of a resulting quality of thought and feeling, an appreciation of values, a habit of choosing excellence rather than mediocrity, a capacity for growth. Our problem, therefore, is to guide each child so that so far as possible each successive book he reads lifts him a step higher in appreciation and deepens or extends his experience beyond the level he has achieved before. At the same time, the process must lead definitely to an increasing satisfaction in reading, for only so can we insure a hunger for more.

First of all, we need to sense what qualities distinguish a good book from an inferior one, or a good reading habit from a poor one. President McAfee of Wellesley College recently remarked that the chief evidence of culture on the part of a college faculty is "a capacity for being at home in a large world." We need to make children conscious of the breadth of the reading world and see to it that they have a well-rounded program of reading. We can recognize by posters or in notebooks the major areas of fun, fact, and fancy in books, and we can help children to see for themselves whether they are slighting one area of experience or another. At the same time, we need to furnish abundant reading in areas of individual concern, so that special interests and talents may be fostered. I think, for example, of the ten-year-old boy tremendously interested in science to whom Benz's *Pasteur, Knight of the Laboratory* or Disraeli's *Seeing the Unseen* will appeal in spite of their difficulty for the average child of that age, or the girl of musical talent for whom *Joseph Haydn, the Merry Little Peasant* or *Deep Flowing Brook*, the life of John Sebastian Bach, will have unusual significance.

There is little space here to discuss the question of what distinguishes a good book from a poor one. We need to help children sense concretely what is good about the

better books they read. Which books are fun because they move swiftly, have an economy of telling, and come to a good point in the end? *Angus and the Ducks* is a good example. *Ask Mr. Bear* is somewhat less effective because it is longer in the telling, and the surprise at the end seems less satisfying to little children. Most effective of all perhaps is such a story as *The Three Billy Goats Gruff* or *The Bremen-Town Musicians*, both of which march forward with spirited step through brief, concise, easily followed incidents to the grand climax for which the children are waiting. Again, a flat, uninteresting story of Ola would have presented him as casually meeting the peddler by the roadside. Not so authors with the humor and imagination of the D'Aulaires. Ola is

buried in snow, only his red stocking cap showing. The peddler spies the cap and thinks of the coppers it will bring. He lifts it and, to his amazement and the exceeding great glee of the youthful reader, a small boy emerges from underneath.

Which books extend the range and deepen the quality of children's understanding and experience? Which furnish a wealth of information with a minimum of talking down or a minimum of undistinguished conversation between some other boys or girls who went in search of the same information? Which, finally, have in their manner of telling that "Magic Touch" which children soon learn to identify in passages which give them a lift of spirit because of their beauty, their effectiveness, or their imaginative quality?

READING POSITIONS

By GLUYAS WILLIAMS



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Children Like Folk Tales

What is there about a folk tale that fascinates children? Miss Maier, instructor and supervisor, Froebel League Professional School for Teachers, New York City, gives two reasons—their appeal to children's interests and certain elements of structure that children find satisfying. She also names some modern stories which have become favorites because of their folk tale qualities.

THE PROBLEM of whether or not to read folk tales to young children has been and probably will continue to be a controversial one. There are many people who feel that the young child is interested only in those things in his immediate surroundings and therefore must have stories about the milkman, the policeman or a steam shovel. There is no question as to the value of these stories if they are well written, as well as accurate in information, but why limit the child to these alone?

From personal experience I have found that if given a choice between a modern story and a folk tale, young children will almost invariably choose the folk tale. What charm do these tales hold that makes the child ask for them over and over again?

Most educators will agree upon the elements of structure that are important in the story: (1) the child's interest must be caught in the first few sentences; (2) there should be little or no description; (3) the story action must be continuous; (4) the story should have a simple plot leading up to the climax; (5) the ending must be satisfying and abrupt.

Do the folk tales meet these standards? There is no group of stories that in the

first few words catches the interest of a child or even an adult as do the folk tales in their introductory sentences. The very words, "Once upon a time," awaken the imagination and demand interest and attention. Notice the opening sentence of *Chicken Licken*:

As Chicken Licken went one day to the wood, an acorn fell upon her poor bald pate and she thought the sky was falling down.

Here we have been introduced to the main character, and the one incident around which the whole story evolves is presented in the first sentence.

Folk tales spend little time in setting the stage. The characters are introduced almost immediately and as their actions speak for them, explanations are brief and often unnecessary. What more need we know about the appearance of the Ugly Troll in *The Three Billy Goats Gruff* than the fact that he had "Eyes as big as saucers and a nose as long as a broomstick"? Our imaginations will conjure a picture much more vivid than could be written in several paragraphs. In the story, *Lazy Jack*, we find the perfect description of a lazy person expressed in homely but forceful terms—"He would do nothing but bask in the sun in the hot weather, and sit by the corner of the hearth in the winter time."

Do these stories have a simple plot? Perhaps the simplest plot can be found in the accumulative type of nursery tale such as the *Old Woman and Her Pig* in which the old woman buys a pig, has trouble getting him home, goes in search of help to no avail, until she meets a cat who, when given a saucer of milk, agrees to help the old woman. Then—

The cat began to kill the rat; the rat began to gnaw the rope; the rope began to hang the butcher; the butcher began to kill the ox; the ox began to drink the water; the water began to quench the fire; the fire began to burn the stick; the stick began to beat the dog; the dog began to bite the pig; the little pig in a fright jumped over the stile; and so the old woman got home that night.

Then there is the plot found in *The Three Pigs* in which the first and second pig, due to lack of foresight, meet disaster in their encounter with the wolf; but the third pig who is just a bit more clever than the wolf outwits him at his own game and cooks the wolf for dinner.

We find no extraneous material to hinder the progress of the plot. There is steady progress to a conclusion which is natural and satisfying. The abrupt manner in which these tales come to an end gives them a spark lost in many present day stories, as can be seen in the quotation from the *Old Woman and Her Pig* previously noted or in the conclusion of *Chicken Licken* wherein Foxy Loxy, being very clever, settles the grave problem of the sky falling down in a most natural and conclusive way:

He led them to his hole, where he soon ate up poor Chicken-Licken, Henny-Penny, Cocky-Locky, Ducky-Lucky, Draky-Laky, Goosy-Loosy, Gander-Lander, and Turkey-Lurky, and they never saw the king to tell him the sky had fallen.

The examples used here to show the way in which the folk tales meet the requirements as to elements of structure are necessarily limited. However, these qualities can be found in all folk tales that have been collected and retold with few changes from the original.

The problem of selecting a story for young children has merely been approached when it has passed the test of structure. The most important factor is that of meeting the child's interest. By looking back

into the history of folk tales we find that they were originally told by wandering vendors for the entertainment of the folk. What is most significant is that from these earliest times we find that children have taken this material as their own.

Rare is the adult who upon hearing the mention of *Cinderella*, *Rumpelstiltskin* or *Jack and the Bean Stalk* does not register a knowing glint of pleasure, and traces back into his childhood memories to recall the long unthought-of pleasures of these simple unforgettable tales. Thus, these tales have lived not only from generation to generation, but live forever in the memories of those who have known them in their childhood. In fact, if this were not true, we would have lost the "heart" of our present-day literature many centuries ago. This alone must be proof of their everlasting charm for children and adults alike.

The world of the folk tales is that of all children; there is no class distinction. Animals are capable of talking and performing all human acts, and imagination is allowed free rein. We find kings and queens visiting the homes of the lowly; pigs building houses, and elves helping a poor shoemaker to make his way in the world of reality. These do not seem incongruous to a child who considers the jolly old street-cleaner his companion, who treats his pet dog as another child, or who has an imagination capable of converting an old board into an ocean steamer.

Modern Stories That Are Favorites

Perhaps the most outstanding of the modern stories that have become favorites of little children is Helen Bannerman's *Little Black Sambo* which decidedly contains the atmosphere of a folk tale, even to the opening sentence—"Once upon a time there was a little black boy, and his name was Little Black Sambo." Little Black Sambo is on speaking terms with the animals, and the tigers show the human char-

acteristics of bragging and jealousy.

Equally popular is Wanda Gág's story, *Millions of Cats*. Here again we have the folk tale introduction. "Once upon a time there was a very old man, and a very old woman." The imagination runs far afield in picturing—

Cats here, cats there

Cats and kittens everywhere

Hundreds of cats

Thousands of cats

Millions and billions and trillions of cats.

A jingle is a common element found in many folk tales. In this story, again, the old man and old woman talk to the animals and the animals understood them.

Peter, the well-loved rabbit in Beatrix Potter's *Tale of Peter Rabbit* has all the characteristics of a normal, mischievous child. He is even human enough to have to be put to bed without his supper because of the distressing pains of a stomach-ache.

Here we find another one of the most outstanding features of the folk tale—animals exemplifying human feelings and actions.

The Runaway Saradine (Emma L. Brock), *The Little Lamb* (Dahris Martin), and *Walter, the Lazy Mouse* (Marjorie Flack) will be found to have folk tale qualities to varying degrees. They contain simplicity of plot and sentence structure, a pleasing mingling of fancy with fact, and that quality of being universally liked because of underlying truths that are common to all people.

These talented authors have been able to give us a "new" story containing the charm and simplicity of the old folk tales, thus winning the approval of the most difficult but most appreciative audience—children. When a story repeatedly brings the exclamation, "Tell it again!", it is one that will live to be loved, and perhaps, as the folk tales, live forever.

Looking at Books

By JOHN HOLMES

In broad daylight the books I see
Shine from the tall shelves down on me
Brighter than summer Sunday noon,
And anything may happen soon.

Sitting deep in the big green chair,
I suddenly heard them talking there.
"A boy's will," said the poet then,
"Is the wind's will," and sailor-men
Sang from the pages of "Westward Ho!"
And "Treasure Island" a "Roll and go"
That echoed light and clear and quick
From "Pinafore" and "Moby Dick."
Will Shakespeare called aloud, and Kim
And Nicholas answered him.

—From *The Horn Book*

November-December, 1939. p. 357

Out of the pages, onto the shelves,
Ran Becky and Tom and Huck themselves.
Danny Deever and Saul sat down
At the feet of the fighting man John Brown.
David and Mowgli were also there,
And a listening boy I thought I knew,
Who might have been me or might be you.

I saw them all from the big green chair,
And heard them there in the quiet light
On the backs of books, so real and right
They must be alive, just as they seem.
And what I am telling is not a dream.

Book and Library Experiences

Here are five brief accounts describing experiences of children and college students having to do with the making of books and the planning and using of libraries. Each experience is quite different yet each had its contribution to make toward developing an appreciation of books and stimulating a desire to read. The contributors are: Rosalie Slocum, well-known illustrator and writer, New York City; Miriam K. Picheny, teacher of first grade, Roselle, New Jersey; Florence Brumbaugh, acting principal, Model School, Hunter College of the City of New York; May I. Lowell, kindergarten teacher, Washington, D. C., and Gertrude M. Faile, teacher of second grade, Cleveland, Ohio.

Miss Slocum helped the children (from fourth through eighth grade) at Brooklyn Ethical Culture School make a book. "It is true that many of the children are gifted, and the school offers unusual opportunities for creative expression. But I believe that a large contributing factor was the cooperative effort which guaranteed long sustained interest and high standards," says Miss Slocum in describing the book. Here is her story of how it was made.

THIS LAST SPRING, when most eyes were turned in horror to the ghastly events that were shaking the world, a group of children, with eager minds and willing hands, were creating a thing of lasting beauty. And all the adults who saw it recognized in this thing a symbol of the potentialities that are inherent in our children, gave tearful thanks that they lived in a free

and democratic country where such an achievement was still possible, and dared to hope that the future will continue to provide such opportunities for everyone.

The thing is a book called *Books Through the Ages*. It is the story of books and bookmaking, of the men, the materials, the processes, from man's earliest attempts in writing to the streamlined books we have today. More than two hundred thirty pages (9" by 10¾"), and scattered profusely with double page, full page and smaller pictures, its chapters cover a wide range of subjects, such as: Newspapers Are As Important As Books Today, A Babylonian Fable Reconstructed, What Greek Books Looked Like, Libraries in Roman Times, How To Make Parchment, The Renaissance, The History of Paper, The Alphabet in Shakespeare's Time, The Industrial Revolution, The Linotype. Some of the writing is purely factual. But often there are stories and poems with fictitious characters and incidents, yet with authentic color suggesting the cultural background that produced the books of each age.

The following paragraphs from my preface in the book explain the steps we took to produce *Books Through the Ages*:

Truly it was an experience in cooperation. Every child contributed either written material or drawings, and in most instances contributed both. It was not the exploitation of a few students with outstanding gifts, nor was it the work of any one school department. In fact, it would not have been possible without the close interrelation of many activities and the generous efforts of the various people who directed them.

Any project with children requires a well-thought-out plan in advance. To insure an organized start, I prepared a factual outline of the

Illustrations from
BOOKS THROUGH THE AGES



Monk Praying (Betty—Grade six)

Towers of Babylon (Leona—Grade four)



The Race (Linda—Grade five)

history of books including only high-light names and key words to facilitate the research work that was to follow. In the finished book, this factual outline, although a part of its structure, is completely overshadowed by the myriad of details, the ideas, the local color, and the rich imagination that the children supplied.

Then the librarian, following the outline, prepared a thorough bibliography. To find material readable for such young children was a real task, and sometimes necessitated the rewriting of technical passages and even translations from foreign source books. The entire bibliography is included at the back of the book.

An integral part of the school curriculum is the study by each grade of a particular civilization which is a central theme for social studies, English, dramatics, and so on. Each class, therefore, was allotted the section of the history of books that fitted most closely its own social studies program.

Once the children had gathered the facts, the classroom teachers were ready to start the writing of the book. At first each child wrote a report, but since the school encourages creative writing, it was not long before original, colorful poems and stories appeared. Of course the original writing reflected not only the recent researches but the year's work in the social studies and English. The writing in the book, except for routine editing, is exactly as it was when delivered by the children.

Preliminary sketches too were also made in the classrooms, done mostly in crayon and pencil. As an intermediate step, some of the children worked out their compositions with cut-outs of colored papers. By using a limited color scheme such as would be required in a book, it was easy to visualize what the finished picture would look like.

Up to this point there existed a large mass of written material and numerous pictures, but as yet it was not a book; it needed integration. An eighth grade boy, with unusual perceptive powers, helped to arrange the material in chronological and logical sequence and then proceeded to write the various introductory, explanatory, and connecting passages that were to give the book its continuous flow and concrete form.

The designing of the pages of the book came next. The format had been decided upon at the

very beginning. It was now necessary to fit the text and the pictures into the pages. A rough dummy with typewritten text and spaces for pictures was made. All the pictures had to fall on specific pages to meet the requirements of the printing press (allowing for four colors on one side of the sheets, and two colors on the other). Naturally this planning had to be done by an experienced person. Then a generous parent typewrote the finished pages on drawing paper, leaving spaces for the pictures.

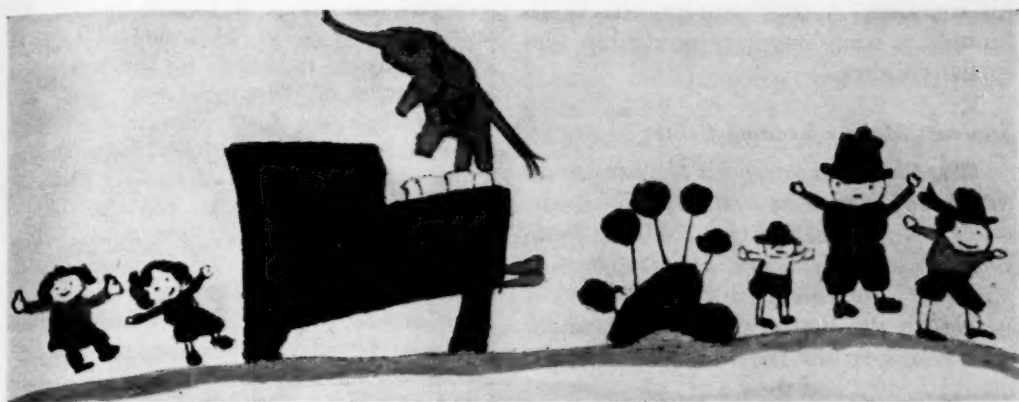
The final stage, and perhaps the most exciting, had come. Each class submitted the color scheme that was actually used by the particular civilization it had studied. The drawings were traced carefully and precisely on the finished sheets. Then one by one, or in small groups, the children came to paint in with water colors their finished pictures. The endsheets of course were also made, and even the cloth binding for the handmade copy was painted. The interest was at fever pitch. Every child, whether talented or not, produced his best work. At times, abilities not before recognized seemed to be suddenly revealed. Not a single page had to be redone!

Finally it was all completed. The table of contents, the foreword, the bibliography had been added and the pages sewn together and bound. Here it was at last, a beautiful book—beautiful not only in its writing and illustrations and design, but beautiful above all because of the spirit in which it was done.

Library Period in Kindergarten

Some activities of a library period in kindergarten aside from listening to stories read or told by the teacher are described by Miss Lowell.

Such experiences for the children as dramatizing stories, making up some to tell to classmates, "reading" from a picture, discussing a book which is held where all may see, or guessing what comes next in a tale contribute greatly to enjoyment of books and the development of interest in learning to read. Sometimes the children arrange pictures in sequence or play with jingles supplying the rhyming word in the lines. At other times they listen to a child



From *The Further Adventures of Tommy*

Tommy does tricks while Augustus stands on his head and plays the piano with his hind legs

from the first grade who can read so well that he is permitted to give the kindergartners a treat, or again they may bring a book from home or from the library corner to share with others, or even play they are in a real library where they observe the admonition of the sign, "Silence."

Through sharing these enjoyable experiences with books and stories, the children not only become curious about but enthusiastically interested in new books, their vocabularies are enriched, and they grow in power of attention and concentration. We are experimenting with a library record and a reading readiness record for each child so that we can follow individual development more carefully. The library record contains such items as "can tell a story from a picture," "can make up a story," "listens well to storytelling."

We Write a Sequel

Mrs. Picheny describes an excursion into story writing with seven- and eight-year-olds after they had been revelling in H. G. Wells' "The Adventures of Tommy."

Mr. Wells' story ends with the unusual gift of a pet elephant which a rich man sent Tommy for saving his life when he fell into the water, and a suggestion that all that Tommy and the elephant did to-

gether might someday be written into another book.

Seeing the possibilities in this statement I asked the children what Tommy and Augustus would do together. Suggestions from the children came so fast that a book had to be written about it.

For two weeks everything, including reading, writing, and arithmetic, revolved about the important business of writing *The Further Adventures of Tommy*. I was kept busy typing stories, the children read and reread them, and drew pictures to illustrate them. When the stack of material piled high on the table, all worked together to assemble it.

In the children's sequel to Mr. Wells' story, Tommy and Augustus build a house with a door big enough for even an elephant to go through. After a hard day's work they are glad to get into their beds. How Tommy tries to make Augustus a cowboy suit; how Augustus entertains some children and earns a circus tent; how Tommy and Augustus set out to find the rich man are all to be learned by reading the story and observing the illustrations.

When finished, the book was typed in great primer type and mimeographed; the pictures traced, mimeographed and colored, and each child carried one home to add to

his treasures. A copy sent to Mr. Wells brought a complimentary note from him to the children.

Students Make a Reading Center

Miss Brumbaugh reports the various activities engaged in by student teachers who made a reading center that could be duplicated in the classroom by teachers and pupils at a minimum cost.

Here is the list of articles they considered necessary for the library center, the materials used and their cost:

Article	Material	Cost
Bookcase	7 wooden prune boxes	\$.00
Lamp	Discarded bottle, raffia	.05
Shade	Construction paper	.01
Vase	Bottle, raffia	.05
Wastebasket	Ends of prune box	.00
Filing box	2 cheese boxes, hinges	.05
Table	Wood cut to size	.75
Chairs	2 orange crates	.00
Slip covers	Cretonne (2½ yards)	.45
Book ends	Cement (poured in paper milk container)	.05
Bulletin board	Artist's stretchers, cork-sheet	.68
Toy receptacle	Butter tub	.00
Museum	Packing case, cheese, cigar and typewriter ribbon boxes	.00
Scrapbooks	Old window shades for linen-like pages	.00
Textbooks	Free samples from publishers	.00
Magazines	Free samples from publishers	.00
Book	Original, handbound	.15
.....	Paint	.60

While the furniture was being built, other students in the group engaged in the following activities which they believed teachers would plan:

(1) Repaired old books, collected from friends, (2) made booklets from discarded readers, (3) made book lists suitable for third grade children, (4) bought a hanging book shelf at a second-hand store (25 cents), (5)

mounted illustrations of favorite stories, (6) made character dolls, (7) scrambled titles of children's books to be used for seat work, (8) made puzzles of illustrations, (9) made cut-outs of characters, (10) prepared cards with titles and authors to be used for matching game, (11) bought game of Authors, played it, (12) catalogued the books, (13) procured a book exhibit from a book store, (14) organized a reading club, (15) discussed leading authors and illustrators of children's books, (16) attended a book fair, (17) listened to children's stories on the radio, (18) listened to radio talks by authors, (19) one student wrote, illustrated, and bound an original story.

The next step was to use the library as children would be likely to use it. The students enjoyed doing the following:

(1) Made cartoons of books and guessed the titles, (2) collected book advertisements, wrote others, (3) designed book marks, book plates, and book jackets, (4) voted for favorite books, (5) wrote riddles about story characters, (6) gave oral descriptions of characters, (7) made a map of storyland, (8) told stories, (9) listed books for Christmas presents, (10) posted book lists suitable for the season, (11) visited book shop, (12) brought public library cards to college, discussed the use of the library, (13) made library signs and rules, (14) kept a reading record, (15) compared very old books with modern readers, (16) graded the library books according to difficulty.

The students wished to visit a publishing house and printing shop but were unable to do so. They also believed that children should go to other classrooms to give talks about books as well as to invite outside speakers to talk to the group.

Other plans which could not be carried out because of the time limit were these:

(1) Research: The History of Books; (2) debate: The Best Book in Our Library Is.....; (3) book reviews; (4) essays—Books I Should Like to Own, Why I Like to Read, When I Read; (5) scene on sand table; (6) attend a movie after reading a book with the same title and compare; (7) make slides for a story; (8) listen to stories at the museum; (9) make

wood blocks; (10) print a story; (11) have a shadow play; (12) make puppets; (13) list suitable books from the ten-cent store; (14) find poems about books; (15) dress character dolls (historical); (16) plan an assembly program about books; (17) make posters for Book Week; (18) dramatize stories.

A Library Experience

Miss Faile describes a library experience which she felt had value for the children, herself, the parents and the community workers involved in the project.

With a group of children who showed considerable love of reading a trip to a nearby library was made. Here they became acquainted with the librarian and learned something about her work. She read an interesting story, talked about the care of books, explained how we could assist her by proper behavior when we came to the library and showed us how to choose books we really could read and enjoy. Some of us had our own library cards, others applied for theirs, so we returned to school with some very interesting books.

Then the milkman, grocer, fireman, dairyman and banker came in for their share of interest and trips to become acquainted with them and their work were planned.

To keep a record of the trips a simple map of the community was made on which the school was marked, and a key was devised to record all the visits made. Before making a trip the children knew what they wanted to see, to whom they wanted to talk, and what they wanted to find out. And they always phoned, wrote a note, or made a personal call to find out if it would be convenient for them to visit. Frequently a committee handled all the details.

So much interest was shown in the community workers and so many books were brought to school from home and public

libraries that it became imperative to make provision to care for them. So a library was built in the classroom with chairs, book-cases and a librarian's desk.

While some of the group was busy with construction work, others brought pictures from home and cut, classified and pasted them in books. There were books on sports, transportation, flowers, pets, dolls, houses, foods, and many other subjects. A story of all trips was put in booklet form, illustrated in art periods, and several copies placed in the library. A book of radio songs was made. Many children loaned copies of their own books. A few were donated by parents and friends and the local library lent a selection, so the book problem was easily solved.

Since the position of librarian was much sought after it was decided by ballot. His (or her) duty was to keep a record of the books read by the children, help the smaller children select books wisely, explain to visitors the purpose of the library and answer questions. She (or he) appointed her own committee to keep things orderly. The books were classified according to subject content, and the children were free to go to the library at any time after their regular work was finished.

A formal opening was planned to which parents and friends were invited. After a brief program at which the children explained the growth of the library, refreshments were served and parents, teacher, pupils, friends spent the remainder of the afternoon visiting and enjoying the library—a result of their cooperative efforts.

The experiences that developed in the planning and making of the library were very important to the children, their parents who cooperated in the actual construction, and to me for there were so many opportunities to know the children better and to discover their reading interests.

Childhood Education and the Defense of Democracy

WILLIAM H. BRISTOW, assistant director, Bureau of Reference, Research, and Statistics of the New York City Schools, was a recent

visitor at the A.C.E. offices. The conversation had to do with the national defense program, present trends in early childhood education, and certain movements which would seem to jeopardize gains already made in educating children for democratic living. At our invitation Mr. Bristow has stated editorially some of his opinions expressed during the conversation:

The first line of defense for any economic or political system is the care of its children and its program of early childhood education. No system of vocational schools, secondary, or higher education, regardless of how elaborate, can make up for the lack of background brought on by a narrow, stilted, and sterile childhood. Understanding teachers who contribute to the enrichment and development of children are rendering the highest patriotic service to the nation.

It is hoped that decreasing enrollments brought on by a falling birth rate will make possible needed improvements in preschool and elementary education. Apparently the down turn in enrollment has been reached, but as yet only in limited areas have the schools been overhauled in the light of the present-day needs of either children or society.

What is being done in these few areas in the better service of childhood and democracy? Decreased enrollments have reduced class sizes to a reasonable number and have provided craft, play, and creative art rooms. There is a trend to organize the primary grades into a unit, making possible greater continuity and adjustment through consideration of differences in maturity, growth, and readiness. Psychological and supervisory services are made available to teachers for the purpose of helping them, not rating them. Teachers and parents share in the formulation of school policies; children share in decisions, discuss freely, take the consequences of their decisions, and grow in self-control and ability to "take it". Instruction is individualized; attention is paid to the slow learning, the bright, and the physically and mentally handicapped.

The curriculum is flexible, making large use of the environment and concerns itself with vital problems and issues, including the meaning and significance of democracy as it affects children in the home, the school, and the com-

munity. Textbooks have been improved in content and format; use is made of visual aids, the school excursion, the radio, and the library. Schoolroom furniture is adjustable and adaptable to an active type of education. Teachers study and try out new methods and new plans. Administration, supervision, and teaching are directed toward the understanding of children, their needs, interests, growth, and development. The schoolroom is a vital, living, creative force in the life of the community. Children are happy, well-adjusted, conscious that they count and that they belong.

As yet, however, too few children have the benefit of these practices. Education in the defense of democracy requires that we put into effect in an increasing number of schools those better practices which now characterize good schools. It requires that we give consideration to early childhood education as well as to vocational education and civic education. A positive program is needed which will gain support for proper budgets, and develop an attitude that only those who understand and know children and who appreciate the part the schools should play in a democracy shall be intrusted with the task of guiding young minds. Coupled with this there must be a defensive strategy against programs which take an undue amount for pensions thereby bringing reduced state budgets for education; against economy leaguers who economize mainly at the expense of young children, especially kindergartners; against blocs seeking and securing appropriations for extra curricular activities but opposing federal funds for the schools proper.

The development and defense of early childhood education is the best possible defense of democracy. Let us guard well the frontiers already conquered.—William H. Bristow.

A Gun for Sonny

TWO YEARS AGO, Patty L. Freeman, a student at National College of Education, made a brief questionnaire study to find out what a few representative schools were doing about children's gun play. "I was teaching in an orphanage where guns, swords, and simi-

Across the

Editor's Desk

lar weapons were prohibited, where radio programs were chosen carefully and where war was not a topic of conversation. In spite of this, the children would merrily gnaw out their sandwiches in the shape of guns, and ransack the wood pile for daggers and other weapons. "So what", I said, and laid the question aside," reports Miss Freeman.

"The time came when a very stimulating discussion took place in our social studies class—shall we have parades, glorify the soldier, allow guns in school? The more we talked the bigger the problem grew in my mind. I resolved to find out through a questionnaire what representative schools were doing about it. The questions were: Do you consider gun play a serious problem in your school? What do you think accounts for its popularity? How do you handle the problem in preschool, primary, and later elementary? Do you consider gun and war play of children a determining factor in adult attitudes toward war?" Here is a summary of what Miss Freeman found out:

Fourteen percent of the schools replied that gun play was a definite problem. Another fourteen percent stated that while it was not a problem at the present time¹ (1938), it was a recurring one. The remaining seventy-two percent indicated that it was no problem at all.

Listed in the order of their importance as causes of the popularity of gun play were the following: movies, radio, newspaper comics, pictures in magazines and periodicals, toys suggestive of war, parades, battleships in the harbors, compensation—gun play is a symbol of power and authority hence irresistible to a weaker and dominated group, discussions of war at home, fathers' interests in guns, and influence of older children on playgrounds away from school.

Half the group suggested providing substitutes for exciting gun play, giving reasons why it should not be done, and discussing with the children why guns should not be used at school. From one school came a warning, "Above all, avoid moralizing or deploring." Two other schools stressed the teaching of right use of guns, while one said, "Prohibit them."

Only one response stated that gun and war play of children was a determining factor in adult attitudes toward war. Others believed that it might be a contributing factor, a few felt it was not. Stated one person, "My own opinion is that the play in itself is not a determining factor, but an overflow of energy and natural instinct which takes the most obvious outlet presented by the environment. However, the way that it is handled, the failure to seize opportunities arising from it to build up better concepts and to direct this energy into better channels may be serious contributing factors."

Miss Freeman concludes her report with these questions for consideration: "If we do lean toward the recapitulation theory, shall we toss this whole problem on the rubbish heap? Are adults creating a problem because of their own deep-seated feeling regarding the horrors of war? Who are the heroes we point to that children want to imitate? Should we attempt any prohibitions at school? Are we getting to the root of the problem by this means? If we do not consider gun play as being instrumental in shaping out adult attitudes toward war, shall we passively accept the radio programs, parades, movies, and toys which introduce children to the subject of war? By stimulating adults to concentrate on the removal of these war influences, isn't there a possibility that prohibition will be stressed rather than a constructive educational program? How can we educate and reconstruct ideas of war so that children may be thrilled with the glories of peace?"

Again, we ask, "What is happening to our children today, and why?"

New Effort to Improve High School Curriculum

AMONG THE most popular educational efforts of recent years have been numerous projects and studies intended to cause high school courses of study to be more closely adapted to present-day needs, but most of them have had little effect. In January, 1940, the American Youth Commission asked ten educators to prepare a report showing major changes in high school curriculums on which unanimous agreement might be found, with the thought that such a report might bring action. On August 26 the report appeared entitled, "What the High Schools Ought to Teach."¹ It has aroused newspaper

¹ Copies may be obtained from the American Youth Commission, 744 Jackson Place, Washington, D. C., at twenty-five cents each.

comment widely throughout the country. Here is an editorial from *The Washington Post* of August 13, concerning the report: (It was titled, "Out of Step.")

"Almost every educated person in the country is aware of grave deficiencies in our high schools. Perhaps no group has been more successful in pointing out those shortcomings, however, than the committee of 10 educators which has just handed its report to the American Youth Commission.

"Of course, the American high school serves many useful purposes. But it fails miserably in preparing youths to meet the problems that will confront them as soon as they complete or prematurely drop their scholastic training. No group has yet succeeded in coordinating the instruction offered in these secondary schools with the needs of the young people themselves or with the national welfare.

"Our high schools not only try to equip a vast majority of their pupils for white collar jobs; they also cultivate the assumption such jobs are a sort of natural inheritance of those

who complete high school courses. Yet 'any examination of the opportunities that are really open,' as the authors of the current report point out, 'makes it clear that the hopes fostered by the present educational system are sure to be disappointing for most of those now registered in secondary schools.'

"If this report leads to a general shakeup in the curricula and the general objectives of the high school, it will render an invaluable service. In some other fields the American people are beginning to learn that peace and prosperity are not an inevitable result of technological progress and popular education. We are beginning to understand more clearly than we have done for a generation the necessity of work and sacrifice along with specialized knowledge and a certain degree of culture.

"School programs that ignore these realities are in need of sharp readjustments. It is encouraging to note that leaders in the field of education are working out timely and practical suggestions to that end."

California Welcomes the A. C. E.

All of California welcomes you to the Association for Childhood Education Conference at Oakland, July 8-12, 1941.—*Mrs. Esther Lipp, Local A.C.E. Convention Chairman.*

Welcome! Seven Times Welcome!
As you follow the Santa Fe Trail,
As you answer the call of American youth,
To A.C.E.—all hail!

In the saga of the southland
The caballero gay
Steps from Time's own pages
To welcome you today.

Wind, deep in the valley;
Sun, o'er the desert sand;
Mission bells on the highway
Bear the mark of the padre's hand.

Whither, O Child of Tomorrow,
Life asks of you, today?
As leaders of children gather
To find "The American Way."

—By *Mary Gen Scott*



Mrs. Esther Lipp

"The Tender Good School"

MANY YEARS ago a young teacher in the deep South received a letter addressed to "The Tender Good School", a native interpretation of kindergarten. The kindergarten that inspired the address was the first of its kind in Alabama and was located in a cotton-mill community in the northern part of the state.

Most of the mill workers came from the near-by mountains, a spur of the Cumberland range. They were a warm-hearted, generous people just then in a stage of adjustment from the slow-moving, isolated life of the mountains to one largely measured and governed by factory whistles. Though of fine intelligence, they had had little or no opportunity to go to school and their interest in education was negligible. It was a question whether or not they would regard such an unknown thing as kindergarten with favor, but without any reason that could ever be explained, they took the new institution into their hearts and lives from the very first.

Soon a string of little folk, wee, shy boys and tiny, bright-eyed girls with three-cornered shawls tied over their heads, climbed the red clay hill on which the kindergarten had been established. They came of a singing people and everything connected with music appealed to them, but with stories they had had no acquaintance. It was not until one that reflected the activities and experiences of their environment was made for them that their interest was aroused and their attention held. But once having discovered that there was meaning to the many words that the teacher was fond of saying, they were ready to hear more, and at last came a day when a small boy announced, "You can tell me all the stories you want to."

The only artistic background that these little ones had was the patchwork quilt to be found in every home. On sunny days the clotheslines of the mill-town fairly glowed with the colorful designs of "Rising Suns", "Flower Gardens" or "Broken Stars". And the children who slept under these quilts were color lovers. To deck themselves with kindergarten beads was a never-ending joy and the days when they went home bearing gay paper chains were gala occa-

sions. Everything that they made they called "play-pretties", which were carefully preserved by the mothers. It is not unusual to meet men and women today who still possess faded bits of handwork made in the first kindergarten.

The work was the simplest and most definite, chosen not because it conformed to some system or program, but because it helped the child to gain skill and self-confidence. Accuracy was encouraged at this stage more than originality, and neatness was regarded as the acme of accomplishment.

Great care was taken to avoid everything that might put the child out of joint with his natural surroundings. The equipment of the kindergarten was mostly home-made. The tiny chairs were split-bottomed; the toys the least expensive. Among these the best beloved was a rag-bodied doll with a china head whose name was Jennie Bluebell.

Jennie Bluebell served as an early link between the homes and kindergarten as she went on a constant round of visits. It was a great event in the life of any of the little girls to have Jennie spend the night with her and invariably the doll returned to school with neatly washed and ironed clothes or with a new dress made by the fingers of some mother who, overworked though she was, found time to do honor to the beloved guest from the kindergarten. Jennie Bluebell's body was often renewed but her head lasted for fifteen years!

Through little homely ways like this a bond of lasting friendship and understanding was welded. There was no thought of the privileged or underprivileged. Teachers learned from parents and parents from teachers and all worked together for the "least ones."

Alabama's first kindergarten still stands on the red clay hill for the same purpose, a multiple and broad one, with which it began almost thirty-nine years ago: to provide a playplace for the little children of the district; to furnish them with suitable toys and materials for happy play; to direct their activities into right channels and last, but not least, to safeguard and preserve the gifts of childhood amid the complexities of modern life.

Book . . .

REVIEWS

Editor, ALICE TEMPLE

THE CHILD AND THINGS. By Edwina Fallis with Foreword by Olga Adams. Yonkers-on-Hudson, New York: World Book Company, 1940. Pp. 184. \$1.68.

Experimentation with unstandardized materials began in the kindergarten as long ago as the 1890's, notably in Chicago. Teachers were eager at that time to find materials and processes that were better adapted to the interests and abilities of children than the traditional "gifts and occupations." They discovered that children, once given the opportunity to experiment freely with a variety of materials and tools, soon found that with a little guidance they could make simple toys related to their play interests.

It was not until the 1920's, however, that this movement made much progress either in kindergartens or primary grades, except in a few laboratory schools. Since that decade there has been increasing acceptance of the theory underlying the movement but failure on the part of many school administrators to provide the required facilities. Teachers are still asking how they can secure the material and equipment necessary to enable children to carry on activities now recognized as essential to their fullest development. *The Child and Things* is an answer to this question. "To show the teacher of young children how with little cost in time, money, or energy she can provide equipment for her children which will materially enrich their school experiences is the purpose of this book".

In the nine chapters Miss Fallis offers a wealth of practical suggestions all of which have been tested in public school classrooms. These concern such matters as: ways of securing better light and more space in the classroom; providing places for things; making equipment for physical activities; various materials and tools and how to use them in connection with things to build, things to make and keep, things to wonder about, signs and symbols, story toys.

This book with its photographs, drawings, and clear descriptions will be welcomed by teachers of young children everywhere who need the kind of help it offers.—A. T.

A LIVING PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION. By Carleton Washburne. New York: The John Day Company, 1940. Pp. 585. \$4.00.

This volume carrying the word "philosophy" in its title contains no single chapter heading that one would expect to find in a book on philosophy. Some reviewers, therefore, will criticise the titling. Not so the present reviewer. Mr. Washburne sets forth explicitly in his preface his reason for using the title and it is only fair to judge the book in the light of its announced purpose. The book is a "philosophy" because it is an attempt to analyse, honestly and critically, what is being done in education, and how and why it is being done. The author calls it a "living" philosophy because it grows out of the lives and needs of pupils living in Winnetka.

It is a thick volume with an enormous amount of concrete detail organized into five parts. Part I deals with the child as a person having some basic needs in common with all other persons. Eight chapters cover mental and physical health, maladjustment, the work of psychologists and counselors, and the nursery school. Part II deals with the child as an individual needing opportunities for expression. Eight chapters discuss the arts and crafts, dramatics, vocational education. Part III deals with the child as a member of an interdependent society. Twelve chapters cover reading, writing, and arithmetic, science, readiness, and integration. Part IV is concerned with the organic unity of society and the realization of the individual within society. Eight chapters discuss citizenship, social responsibility, and democracy. In the fifth part the author turns to another phase of the subject. Here are six chapters analysing the type of democratic school administration necessary to realise the type of education portrayed.

The style is vivid and inviting, easily read. There is no bibliography for the book is documented by direct experience rather than by quoting other writers. This, with the direct style and the copious use of incidents, anecdotes, and situations will create for many readers a sense of superficiality and dogmatism. Generalizations are drawn and advice given which may

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or may not be generally applicable, but those who know Mr. Washburne, his work, his enthusiastic convictions, and his sincerity will not be offended. The volume will be widely read by, and be useful to inexperienced and experienced teachers alike.—*W. H. Burton, Graduate School of Education, Harvard University.*

UP THE LADDER. By *Charlotte L. Filkins.* New York: *The Poets' Press*, 1940. \$1.00.¹

Mrs. Filkins has written a delightful book of songs and rhythms for children. All of the material has been used successfully in Mrs. Filkins' own school and other public schools of Buffalo, New York. The songs are simple and musical. Teachers who do not play the piano proficiently should welcome the little pieces for rhythmic movement. There is a tom-tom piece and one each for ponies, fairies, brownies, snowflakes, elephants, and two dances for a rag doll.

The four photographs by Fred W. Mattern will add to the interest of children in the book.—*Alton O'Steen, Ohio State University.*

INTEGRATED HANDWORK FOR ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS. By *Louis V. Newkirk.* New York: *Silver Burdett Company*, 1940. Pp. 342. \$3.20.

As suggested by its title the emphasis in this book is upon handwork, not as a subject in itself but as a mode of creative expression highly useful in the learning of many school subjects. The author, who is director of industrial arts and handwork in the Chicago Public Schools, presents the material of his book in two parts. Part I deals with the objectives of handwork and shows its relation to industrial arts, fine arts, social studies, English, science, arithmetic and reading. The usefulness of handwork in teaching procedures is discussed and illustrated through sample activity units. Desirable equipment, materials and tools are fully described and places where they may be obtained with estimated prices are listed.

Part II entitled, "Teachers' Guide in Handwork Techniques," is concerned with some sixteen items as follows: marionettes; lantern slides; book- and paper-making; child-size projects; hand-loom and reed weaving; toys, models and musical instruments; maps and charts; dioramas and panoramas; linoleum block printing and blueprinting; soap carving and soap making; metalworking and electroplating; simple

pottery; leathercraft; sewing and textiles; cooking and foods; science equipment and apparatus. Here, as in Miss Fallis' book, photographs, diagrams and drawings illuminate the text. In this connection it should be noted that these "procedures and suggestions are not intended to be limiting or dogmatic. On the contrary, they should, and it is hoped they will, indicate to alert teachers a great number of possible variations for creative expression." (pp. v, vi).

The selected references following each chapter of the book add to its usefulness.—*A. T.*

SUBJECT INDEX TO BOOKS FOR INTERMEDIATE GRADES. Compiled by *Eloise Rue.* Chicago: *American Library Association*, 1940. Pp. 495. \$4.00.

Here is Miss Rue's second index to reading material for children. Her earlier contribution, *Subject Index to Readers*, reviewed in the September, 1938, issue of *CHILDHOOD EDUCATION*, was confined to material for primary grades. This one includes material for children of grades 4 to 6. Because of the larger amount of reading material available for this age level, the greater skill of the children, and the wider range of subjects with which they are concerned, this index is far more extensive than the earlier one. It contains approximately 4000 subjects and 20,000 entries as compared with the 1000 subjects and 4000 entries of the first index. Miss Rue has omitted, for the most part, poetry and plays because an index to poetry for children is soon to be published by the H. W. Wilson Company and an index to plays is already on the market.

This volume will be as widely used, doubtless, as Miss Rue's earlier book.—*A. T.*

CHILDREN SING. By *Bernice M. Clark.* Published by *Bernice M. Clark, Box 71, Brightwood Station, Springfield, Massachusetts.* \$1.50.

This book contains twenty-five songs, most of them written by Miss Clark to meet actual kindergarten and first grade situations in the public schools of Springfield, Massachusetts. A few of the songs were written by children. The tunes are, without exception, musical and child-like. The subjects are appropriate and interesting. Although in several instances the arrangements are musically somewhat awkward, a little improvisation on the part of the pianist would make them satisfactory.—*Alton O'Steen, Ohio State University.*

¹ Copies may be obtained from the author, 286 Ashland Avenue, Buffalo, New York.

Books...

FOR CHILDREN

Editor, MAY HILL ARBUTHNOT

New Cadmus Books. Schools and individual teachers should send at once for a list of the new Cadmus books published for use in schools and school libraries only. One hundred titles are already available.

The Cadmus books are reprint editions of fine children's books of the last twenty or thirty years. They are in no way shortened, abridged or simplified but are printed from the original plates with even the illustrations intact. Their average price is 78 cents and they range in price from 48 to 99 cents for books that formerly sold for as much as \$2.50 or \$2.75.

To find such titles as, *Snippy and Snapby, Hansi, Dobry, Peacock Pie, Fairies and Chimneys* at such prices, is a real cause for rejoicing. This brings at least some of the fine, recent books for children within reach of even the most reduced school budgets. (Cadmus Books, 111 Eighth Ave., New York, N. Y.)

ANIMALS OF AMERICAN HISTORY. By Paul Bransom and Helen Dean Fish. New York: Frederick A. Stokes and Company, 1939. Pp. 50. \$2.00.

Animals play such an important part in American history and biography that teachers will welcome this beautiful book. The brief text is thoroughly interesting. The pictures, by a noted animal painter, are informative and fine.

WASHINGTON AND THE LAFAYETTES. By Frank and Cortelle Hutchins. New York: Longmans, Green and Company, 1939. Pp. 211. \$2.50.

George Washington Lafayette, named for his father's idol, America's first president, escaped from the French Revolution and came to this country as Washington's protege. His mother and father were political prisoners; his presence in this country could easily jeopardize the neutrality of the new United States. The story of this young man and his relations to the Washington family is delightfully told in this fine book. Young people should read it and teachers can tell much of it to younger ones.

KOBI, A BOY OF SWITZERLAND. By Mary and Conrad Buff. New York: Viking Press, 1939. Pp. 128. \$2.00.

Kobi is the little Swiss boy around whom this narrative of Swiss life is beautifully told. The pleasant home life, the good food, the tasks indoors and out, shared by all the members of the family—these are made real to us through Kobi's share in them and through the rarely beautiful illustrations that illumine the book. There is one dramatic episode when Kobi alone carries the herd through a terrible storm on the mountain tops, but for the most part the story moves quietly.

The Buff's Navaho story, *Dancing Cloud*, was unforgettably beautiful. *Kobi* has equal distinction.

COUSIN TOBY. By Clare Turley Newberry. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1939. Pp. 36. \$1.50.

In her latest book, Clare Newberry gives us children so individualized and yet so universal that they are the very essence of all young children.

Gordon, Jill, and two-year-old cousin Toby have a wonderful day together and then Gordon and Jill must go home where there is no little cousin to feed and play with. The surprise that awaits them adds the portrait of a brand new baby to this delectable gallery.

Miss Newberry's texts are slight but adequate excuses for pictures that are a joy forever. Children two to six and all adults will like *Cousin Toby*.

FIVE BEARS AND MIRANDA. By Henry Beston. New York: Macmillan Company, 1939. Unpaged. \$2.00.

The juxtaposition of five highly domestic bears and a glamorous Mermaid, Miranda by name, turns a desert island into an admirable home. Rescue and escape have no charms for the bears after life with Miranda. Gay nonsense for children six to eight.

Among...

THE MAGAZINES

WORKING TOGETHER ON BOOKS FOR CHILDREN.¹ By Ingri and Edgar Parin d'Aulaire. *The Horn Book*, July-August 1940, 16:247-255.

In accepting the Caldecott medal for *Abraham Lincoln*, which was tendered Ingri and Edgar Parin d'Aulaire by the American Library Association in May, Ingri d'Aulaire tells how she and her husband, each an artist in his own right, work together on books for children without forfeiting their own individuality in their own fields. She describes some of the skills required to make a child's book.

Edgar d'Aulaire, born of an Italian father and an American mother, accounts for his keen interest in America and describes some of the adventures he and his wife have had when collecting information and getting a background.

THE INTER-RELATIONSHIP OF RELIGION AND DEMOCRACY. By Francis J. Macelwane, Philip S. Bernstein, and Ernest J. Chave. *Religious Education*, July-September 1940, 35:141-151.

Three representative people, a president of a college, a rabbi of a synagogue, and a professor of religious education discuss the implications of religion for democracy.

The first part of the paper confines its attention to the need of religion in maintaining the basic philosophy of a democratic government. The second part describes the contribution of the Jews in expressing a democratic way of living and hence the impossibility of participating in a totalitarian government. In the third section, several characteristics which are considered desirable both to religion and democracy are discussed in the light of what religion can do to further their inter-relatedness. These common characteristics are a recognition of the worth of human beings, a respect for human differences, a capacity to appreciate and use freedom, and the utilization of creativity in facing problem situations.

CLEAR CIVIC THINKING. By Denys Thompson. *The New Era in Home and School*, July-August 1940, 21:174-176.

The present plight of mass-democracy, according to the English master of Gresham's School, Holt, England, is in some measure due to the incapacity of the masses to get wisdom, apply knowledge, and read print with understanding. Too many of us employ words and therefore, evidently, ways of thinking that are irrelevant to the facts and situations to which they apply. Training in clear thinking and in the way words affect people will enable pupils to evaluate incitements to fervor, such as propaganda.

Teachers need to be conscious of what they are attempting. They need to be citizens who know how the subjects they teach bear upon the problems which pupils will face after leaving school. One aim is to put each pupil into vital relationship with his environment. Clear civic thinking is a matter of seeing relationships, and every subject taught in school is at times an occasion for promoting it.

EMOTIONS AND THE EDUCATIVE PROCESS. By Esther L. Richards. *Journal of the American Association of University Women*, June 1940, 33:195-200.

How far should creative ability, impulsiveness, emotional urges, and other individualism in childhood and adolescence be allowed to express itself at the expense of rights and privileges of others?

Esther Richards, associate professor of psychiatry at Johns Hopkins University, shows impatience at so-called progressive teachers who talk vaguely of developing leadership and make a fetish of individualism.

Basing her statements upon facts for which there is scientific evidence and experimental material in actual child lives, she asserts that a sense of equanimity and happiness can be developed under the guidance of one who possesses a thorough understanding of children's intellectual and biological make-up and skill in evaluating factors which may influence them.

¹ The October 1935 *Horn Book* gives more information about the interesting d'Aulaires and their method of writing and illustrating children's books.

Research...

ABSTRACTS

Editor, JOHN A. HOCKETT

THE DEVELOPMENT OF CERTAIN MOTOR SKILLS AND PLAY ACTIVITIES IN YOUNG CHILDREN. By Theresa Dower Jones. New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, Child Development Monographs, No. 26, 1939. Pp. xi + 180.

Twenty-four children were repeatedly observed in a controlled situation and in their own homes from the age of twenty-one months to forty-eight months. Over five hundred forty-minute observations were made. A high degree of accuracy in observing and recording is indicated by close agreement of two observers. Both boys and girls from high and low socio-economic groups were included. The children were primarily concerned with certain wheel play materials, but had other materials available.

Elaborate analysis of voluminous records revealed several conclusions regarding the development of play interests and abilities. The wheel materials were used in four major types of play: manipulation, pushing and pulling, propelling, and in combination with other play materials. The activities of children under two years of age were manipulative in nature, consisting in unskilled repetition. There was considerable practice of skills among the children between twenty-four and thirty-six months. At three years of age, the typical child practiced simple skills, used a variety of activities, and tended to think before acting. All this indicated that he was entering a new phase in play behavior. Certain three-year-olds who had mastered the handling of wheel materials used them in their imaginative play. The four-year-old child had proceeded so far in the mastery of skills that he used the various materials in carrying out some predominating idea. The attention span, defined as the length of time a given material is used under free conditions, increased from less than six minutes at two years of age to seven and one-half minutes at three years and to twelve and one-half minutes at four years.

The experimenter found general levels of performance emerging at certain ages. This and other evidence leads to the conclusion that

maturation, as distinguished from practice, is an important factor in the attainment of successive performance levels and in ability to acquire skills. While minimum performance of an activity must wait upon maturation, the development of graceful, coordinated skill requires practice.

The wagon was chiefly used for stationary manipulation at twenty-one months, but was freely pulled about at thirty-three months, while at forty-eight months it served to transport materials and was pulled on inclined surfaces. Before the thirty-third month, the kiddie kar was used as much for manipulation and for pushing and pulling as for propelling, but after this age it was used chiefly for propelling. Throughout the period of the study the dump truck was used both for manipulation and for pushing and pulling. The dump track gained steadily in interest to the fourth year and served the largest number of uses. The doll carriage, on the other hand, served the minimum number of uses and elicited interest for the briefest period. The tricycle proved more suitable than the kiddie kar to some of the three-year-olds and to all of the children at four years. The wagon was more commonly used in social situations and promised far more extensive use beyond the fourth year level than any of the other wheel materials.

The girls showed more interest in combining and arranging materials and the boys were more concerned with the mechanics of the toys. The sex differences increased in the more advanced levels of play, the boys being ahead of the girls in locomotor activities and the use of the incline.

The following conditions in the home environment were found related to successful progress in play activities: a playmate somewhat older than the child, no relative, full-time maid, or adults other than parents in the home; availability of play materials, and outdoor play space giving free opportunity for activity.

The author recommends that if only one wheel play toy can be provided, the dump truck should be the first choice, and a sturdy kiddie kar equipped with pedals as a second choice.

News . . .

HERE AND THERE

New A.C.E. Branches

Illinois Association for Childhood Education
Primary Teachers Council of Klamath County,
Oregon
Reinstated: Twitchell Alumnae Association for
Childhood Education, Springfield, Massachusetts

A.C.E. Fellow

Lorraine Benner, a member of the teaching staff of the Longmeadow, Massachusetts, public schools, came to A.C.E. Headquarters in September as the 1940-41 Fellow appointed by the Executive Board of the Association. On recommendation of Ballard D. Remy, superintendent of schools, the Longmeadow Board of Education has granted Miss Benner leave of absence for the year.



Lorraine Benner

Miss Benner acts as consultant to A. C. E. staff members on all phases of Association activity, giving them the viewpoint of a Branch member in the field and a teacher in service. She is well qualified by study, by her experience as director of the kindergarten at Longmeadow, and by her active work in the Massachusetts A.C.E. She directed in an admirable manner the publicity for the recent conference of this state group at Wellesley.

The 1939-40 fellow represented the Western Region. The fellow for this year represents the North Atlantic Region. She will bring to A.C.E. groups in that section of the country the story of their Association as seen by a member who has spent a year at Headquarters, has participated in national conferences, and has visited Branches and schools in many different places.

Edwina Fallis Retires

With her retirement from teaching in the public school kindergartens of Denver, Colorado, Edwina Fallis completes forty-two years of tireless service as a leader in the field of childhood education in her city and state. She has been active in the Association for Childhood Education for many years, is a life member and a national committee member, and we hope will continue to work with us.

Miss Fallis is nationally known for her development of educational toys for children and for her books, one of which, *The Child and Things*, has just been published. Those who have worked with her anticipate for her many more years of accomplishment along these lines.



Edwina Fallis

Lucy Claire Hoard

Texas lost one of its outstanding teachers and supervisors and the Association for Childhood Education one of its active members with the passing of Lucy Claire Hoard of El Paso, July 8, 1940. She taught in the El Paso public schools from 1913 to 1925, and was principal of an elementary school until 1928 when she was made primary supervisor. In 1937 she joined the faculty of the College of Mines. Many will remember her as general chairman of the 1937 A.C.E. convention in San Antonio, others as president of the Texas A.C.E. from 1936 to 1938 and adviser to the student A.C.E. group at College of Mines from 1938 until her death.

Miss Hoard's delightful personality and devotion to the welfare of young children en-

deared her to all who knew her. Her service to early childhood education and to the Association has been outstanding and her loss will be keenly felt.

A.C.E. Summer Activities

Olga Adams, national president, spent the first two weeks in August at A.C.E. Headquarters in Washington. She attended two conferences which she described for you in the September CHILDHOOD EDUCATION, worked on plans for the 1941 convention in Oakland, California, and discussed with members of Headquarters staff the policies and publications of the national Association.

Jane Joslin, State Teachers College, Towson, Maryland, became a volunteer member of Headquarters staff for five days in June. She evaluated manuscripts, corrected page proof of an A.C.E. bulletin, and as a member of the Committee on Equipment and Supplies advised on the work of that committee.

And now a word about the activities of local Branches and State Associations:

Arkansas: During the summer session an A.C.E. rally was held at State Teachers College, Fayetteville. Amy Hostler, New York City, told of the work of the national Association, and Jennie Milton, also of New York, gave a report of the 1940 A.C.E. convention in Milwaukee.

Massachusetts: A regional conference, sponsored by the Massachusetts A.C.E., was in session at Wellesley College, June 24-28. The theme, "Child Development," was discussed at general sessions and in the nine study classes, by outstanding speakers and leaders from different parts of the country. On "Association for Childhood Education Night" Jennie Wahlert, chairman of the A.C.E. Advisory Committee and a former national president, and Mary E. Leeper, executive secretary, addressed the assembly. Seventeen states were represented in the total registration of 550 persons.

New Hampshire: On July 9, 10 and 11, a Parent-Teacher Institute was held at the University of New Hampshire, Durham. On the second day of the institute members of the New Hampshire A.C.E. were invited guests. Ellen Lombard, U. S. Office of Education, chairman of the A.C.E. Committee on Home and School Cooperation, conducted a lecture hour and discussion period on each of the three days.

New York: The A.C.E. group at Teachers College, Columbia University, New York City, sponsored two events during the summer session, a tea and a dinner. Representatives of Branches in many different places, including the president of the Hawaii A.C.E., attended these meetings. Olga Adams, president, and Mary E. Leeper, executive secretary, represented the national Association.

North Carolina: Each of the seventeen A.C.E. members who attended a tea at Appalachian State Teachers College, Boone, brought five guests whom he wished to interest in the Association. Tables

placed at intervals around the room displayed A.C.E. literature and publications for leisurely examination in a friendly and informal atmosphere.

North Carolina: One hundred members of A.C.E. Branches in North Carolina attended a two-day seminar at the Woman's College, University of North Carolina, Greensboro, June 27-28. The theme was "Broadening Educational Opportunities in Your School." Frances Mayfarth, editor of CHILDHOOD EDUCATION, was guest speaker at the dinner meeting which opened the conference. The morning of the following day was given to observing in the kindergarten and the primary school.

Tennessee: As in former years, the Elementary Council of George Peabody College for Teachers, an A.C.E. group, carried on an active summer program. One hundred people from 27 states were present at the July meeting, a picnic dinner on the College farm. The national Association was represented by Elizabeth Neterer, A.C.E. fellow for 1939-40, and Mary E. Leeper, executive secretary.

American Home Economics Association

As the official representative of the Association for Childhood Education to the national convention of the American Home Economics Association in Cleveland, Ohio, June 23-27, Angelina Fisher Carrell reports as follows:

Most of the meetings I attended dealt with family relationships and child education. This organization stands for and is working untiringly toward the same ideals that we are, feeling that through child development and parental education better schools will result and happier, more substantial homes. Democracy must be practiced in the home if children are to act democratically outside the home.

The American Home Economics Association is eager for other organizations to unite with it for a better democracy. Without losing its own identity each group could contribute from its field of specialization. The need for specialization is recognized but certain goals may be reached more quickly and efficiently if all educational groups cooperate. The Executive Committee of the A.H.E.A. has been asked to suggest a workable plan for such cooperation.

I feel that working with such an organization would bring about higher standards for us all. It would be a two-way process, each group giving and taking, cementing the highest standards of each into a national educational endeavor.

The A.C.E. Poster

A picture of teacher and children at National College of Education, Evanston, Illinois, forms the central motif of the 1940 A.C.E. poster. The predominant colors of the 25 by 50 inch poster are blue and gold. In October a mailing will be made to official publications representatives of A.C.E. Branches. Others wishing single copies of the poster may secure them from A.C.E. Headquarters, 1201 Sixteenth St., N. W., Washington, D. C.

(Continued on page 98)

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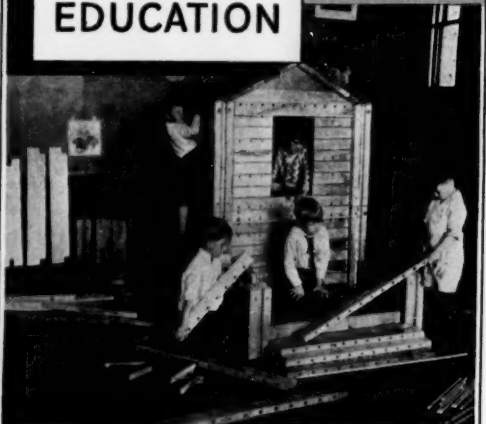
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Weeks of the Year

Each year certain weeks are dedicated to special forms of education, to acquaint the general public and special groups with the work going on all over the country. Two such observances are:

American Education Week: Sponsored by the National Education Association, this twentieth annual observance, November 10-16, has for its theme "Education for the Common Defense." The schools will seek to make public relations programs more effective through acquainting parents and the general public with their achievements, aims and needs. It is estimated that during American Education Week eight million citizens will visit schools and other millions will learn about them through the press, the radio, and public meetings. Topics for individual days are: Enriching Spiritual Life, Strengthening Civic Loyalties, Financing Public Education, Developing Human Resources, Safeguarding Natural Resources, Perpetuating Individual Liberties, Building Economic Security.

Special packets to help schools plan for American Education Week have been prepared for kindergarten-primary, elementary, junior high school, and senior high school levels. These may be secured from

the headquarters of the National Education Association, 1201 Sixteenth St., N. W., Washington, D. C. Price 50c each.

Children's Book Week: To help interest Americans in books and their place in our cultural life, librarians, teachers, bookmen and social agencies have united in the twenty-second annual Children's Book Week, November 10-16. The theme is "Good Books—Good Friends." A manual giving information about Book Week, its history and its significance, with suggestions, pictures and releases to help in its celebration, may be secured from Book Week Headquarters, 62 West 45th St., New York, N. Y.

White House Conference

On June 17 the National Citizens Committee, a group responsible for carrying on the work begun by the White House Conference on Children in a Democracy, adopted by-laws, considered a proposed annual budget, and discussed tentative plans for the work of the Committee for a period of from three to five years. The work undertaken will necessarily depend upon availability of financial support for the proposed activities. In the meantime, the Committee au-

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thorized immediate inauguration of the program, utilizing limited funds which will be available for the next three months.

Temporary headquarters have been established at 105 East Twenty-Second Street, New York City, space and equipment being donated by the New York State Charities Aid Association. H. Ida Curry has been engaged as acting director pending the possible establishment of a permanent staff.

Many inquiries have come from individuals and groups interested in initiating state-wide or local follow-up programs, and from national and local organizations planning studies or activities related to their special fields. Specific advice and dissemination of information have awaited the formulation of the program of the National Citizens Committee. The Committee has planned to obtain immediately information in regard to state follow-up programs already initiated. It will increasingly be in a position to give advice and information to those planning to undertake such activities.

Preprint Available

In the October issue of *School Life*, publication of the U. S. Office of Education, will appear an article by Mary Dabney Davis, "Survey Reports and Current Bulletins." It briefly describes surveys of educational facilities for the child under six, made in various parts of the country, and lists some of the recent publications of special interest to teachers of young children. Preprints are now available and will be sent to teachers upon request to the U. S. Office of Education, Washington, D. C.

Christmas in the Schoolroom

Many teachers are already on the alert for Christmas program suggestions. The December 1938 *CHILDHOOD EDUCATION* was especially devoted to ways of celebrating this important day, as described by teachers in many parts of the country. Among the topics discussed were gift making, dramatization, music and rhythms, and room decoration. Copies of this special issue may be secured, as long as they last, from the Association for Childhood Education, 1201 Sixteenth St., N. W., Washington, D. C. Price 30c each.

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